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THE WORKS OF
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ETHICAL STUDIES

EDINBURGH:
PICTURESQUE NOTES

BY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

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LAY MORALS
AND OTHER ETHICAL PAPERS

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LAY MORALS
AND OTHER ETHICAL PAPERS

INTRODUCTORY

THE person to whom this writing is addressed is any young man, conscious of his youth, conscious of vague powers and qualities, and fretting at the bars of life. Like one who comes late to the doors of the theatre, he finds the crowd compact, and wanders in the open. There seems no entry for him to the business or the serious pleasures of the human world; and he is asked instead to mind dry and somewhat pointless studies, to follow arbitrary rules, and to bear with patience the reproof of persons duller than himself. He is capable of the finest acts and sentiments, which somehow, in his present circumstances, seem never to be in season. In front of him, in the thick of the world, he foresees for himself a leading and romantic part; perhaps not falsely. How to behave in the great walks of life, he seems to know; but in this empty vestibule, where he still waits his turn, there seems a lack of worthy business.

In this writing, nothing has been said with the design of pleasing parents and guardians. I am afraid the work will not be thought good enough to put into the hands of youth by any elder friend, and if the young men, for whom it is intended, do not see and choose it for themselves, it will not improbably remain unread. There are no guides in life, for a thousand reasons; but for this reason first, that we have all so fallen and so bemired ourselves and grown so bewildered in the paths of this rude labyrinth, that not a man among us knows clearly where he is or how he got there. Hence that something of insincerity to which the poor clergyman, forced to hold up a cut and dry ideal, is condemned. In this writing I, having the advantage of the clergy, shall try only to be honest; a hard attempt—"We are upon an undertaking very difficult." And not only difficult, but responsible. But the responsibility of the writer discharges not a jot of the responsibility of him who reads. If you go wrong and are guilty of cruel and unmanly acts, and come, friendless and hating yourself, to the end of a detestable career, the reading of this book will be no more than a pretext for cowards to allege. "There was a nearer neighbour within who was incessantly telling you how you should behave; but you waited for the neighbour from without to tell you of some false, easier way."

The name of God and such expressions as "sin" and "the soul" have been allowed to find a place in the following pages. This may be galling to the feelings of the conscientious atheist, that strange and wooden rabbi—and never so strange and so wooden as when very young. But the writer would have him to notice that, as the work goes on, each of these expressions has its sense explained; that the sense at least is eternal, being founded in experience; that to invent new phrases from old thoughts, though it may be delicately flattering to a school of philosophy, is not the business of a man who loves and seeks to use the purity of English speech; and lastly that as the strictest Christians read and find improvement in the books of pagan sages, the most delicate unbeliever may come perhaps uninjured from the perusal of the name of God. This is perhaps said with bitterness; but what can be more bitter than to find man, in all ages, returning to the angry follies of his youth, and each fresh movement in our superficial thinking made the signal for some renunciation of the past? Being what we are, the descendants at least of savages, the creatures of our fathers, the inheritors of every nerve and feature, the true wisdom for mankind must be ever to explain and to subsume in wider knowledge, not to deny, the faith and experience of predecessors. It is thus that we proceed;

but by a singular infirmity, we cannot return to fill our baskets from the unforgotten wealth of antiquity, without casting forth and treading underfoot the wisdom of some later age. So it is in art; and so in morals.

Lastly, besides the presence of some good old English words, the book is inoffensive to the straitest of the modern sect. It is truly secular and temporal, casts not a glance beyond the little lit tumultuous island of man's life upon the vasty darkness of eternity; and still forgetful of the great myths or more majestic and mysterious verities, busies itself close at hand with the pleasures and prudence of to-day. There is much in common to all; upon that common ground the arguments are founded and from that common store the experience deduced.

To every view of morals there are two sides: what is demanded by the man; what is exacted by the conditions of life. Let us begin with a fragment upon either, not to say what is new, but to remind ourselves of man's extraordinary attributes and situation.

What a man makes of this world for himself, and what view of it he teaches to aspiring youth, gives the measure of what he may hope from him in thought or conduct, and constitutes what we call that man's religion.

(The following should be read after the closing words in the printed text, " they must accept and deal with this money "):

And now, let us look back and see what we have reached upon this practical point of money.

1st.—That wealth should not be the first object in life.

2nd.—That not only so much money as he has earned by services to mankind, can a man honestly spend on his own comfort or delight.

3rd.—That of what he has earned, only so much as he can spend for his own comfort or delight, is his to spend at all; and that whatever is spent by carelessness or through habit or for ostentation, is spent dishonestly and to the hurt of mankind.

4th.—That whatever we have in our hands which we have not earned, or which we cannot spend to profit or sincere pleasure on ourselves, we must return in principal or interest, to mankind at large; to some other persons to whom it will be profitable or sincerely pleasurable.

And 5th.—That this may be best done by helping our own friends.

Is not this a very natural, easy, and plain-sailing scheme of life? Wealth should not be the first object in life; how can it, except in arid and contented natures, or after some violence has been done to the mind externally in the misused name of Prudence? We have a thousand instincts, and a man who begins life wisely must consider them all, and not only that which leads us to desire wealth. Is it natural to buy things we have no mind to? to eat and drink till we are sick? And is it not the natural motion of the soul to communicate wealth among our friends and make them all prosperous in our prosperity?

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LAY MORALS

CHAPTER I

THE problem of education is twofold: first to know, and then to utter. Every one who lives any semblance of an inner life thinks more nobly and profoundly than he speaks; and the best of teachers can impart only broken images of the truth which they perceive. Speech which goes from one to another between two natures, and, what is worse, between two experiences, is doubly relative. The speaker buries his meaning; it is for the hearer to dig it up again; and all speech, written or spoken, is in a dead language until it finds a willing and prepared hearer. Such, moreover, is the complexity of life, that when we condescend upon details in our advice, we may be sure we condescend on error; and the best of education is to throw out some magnanimous hints. No man was ever so poor that he could express all he has in him by words, looks, or actions; his true knowledge is eternally incommunicable, for it is a knowledge of himself; and his best wisdom comes to him by no process of the mind, but in a supreme self-dictation, which keeps varying from hour to hour in its dictates with the variation of events and circumstances.

A few men of picked nature, full of faith, courage, and contempt for others, try earnestly to set forth as much as they can grasp of this inner law; but the vast majority, when they come to advise the young, must be content to retail certain doctrines which have been already retailed to them in their own youth. Every generation has to educate another which it has brought upon the stage. People who readily accept the responsibility of parentship, having very different matters in their eye, are apt to feel rueful when that responsibility falls due. What are they to tell the child about life and conduct, subjects on which they have themselves so few and such confused opinions? Indeed, I do not know; the least said, perhaps, the soonest mended; and yet the child keeps asking, and the parent must find some words to say in his own defence. Where does he find them? and what are they when found?

As a matter of experience, and in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand, he will instil into his wide-eyed brat three bad things: the terror of public opinion, and, flowing from that as a fountain, the desire of wealth and applause. Besides these, or what might be deduced as corollaries from these, he will teach not much else of any effective value: some dim notions of divinity, perhaps, and book-keeping, and how to walk through a quadrille.

But, you may tell me, the young people are taught to be Christians. It may be want of penetration, but I have not yet been able to perceive it. As an honest man, whatever we teach, and be it good or evil, it is not the doctrine of Christ. What he taught (and in this he is like all other teachers worthy of the name) was not a code of rules, but a ruling spirit; not truths, but a spirit of truth; not views, but a view. What he showed us was an attitude of mind. Towards the many considerations on which conduct is built, each man stands in a certain relation. He takes life on a certain principle. He has a compass in his spirit which points in a certain direction. It is the attitude, the relation, the point of the compass, that is the whole body and gist of what he has to teach us; in this, the details are comprehended; out of this the specific precepts issue, and by this, and this only, can they be explained and applied. And thus, to learn aright from any teacher, we must first of all, like a historical artist, think ourselves into sympathy with his position and, in the technical phrase, create his character. A historian confronted with some ambiguous politician, or an actor charged with a part, have but one pre-occupation; they must search all round and upon every side, and grope for some central conception which is to explain and justify the most extreme details; until that is found, the politician is an enigma, or perhaps a quack, and the part a tissue of fustian sentiment and big words; but once that is found, all enters into a plan, a human nature appears, the politician or the stage-king is understood from point to point, from end to end. This is a degree of trouble which will be gladly taken by a very humble artist; but not even the terror of eternal fire can teach a business man to bend his imagination to such athletic efforts. Yet without this, all is vain; until we understand the whole, we shall understand none of the parts; and otherwise we have no more than broken images and scattered words; the meaning remains buried and the language in which our prophet speaks to us is a dead language in our ears.

Take a few of Christ's sayings and compare them with our current doctrines.

"*Ye cannot*," he says, "*serve God and Mammon.*" Cannot? And our whole system is to teach us how we can!

"*The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.*" Are they? I had been led to understand the reverse: that the Christian merchant, for example, prospered exceedingly in his affairs; that honesty was the best policy; that an author of repute had written a conclusive treatise, *How to make the best of both worlds*. Of both worlds indeed! Which am I to believe then—Christ or the author of repute?

"*Take no thought for the morrow.*" Ask the Successful Merchant; interrogate your own heart; and you will have to admit that this is not only a silly but an immoral position. All we believe, all we hope, all we honour in ourselves or our contemporaries, stands condemned in this one sentence, or, if you take the other view, condemns the sentence as unwise and inhumane. We are not then of the "same mind that was in Christ." We disagree with Christ. Either Christ meant nothing, or else he or we must be in the wrong. Well says Thoreau, speaking of some texts from the New Testament, and finding a strange echo of another style which the reader may recognise:

"Let but one of these sentences be rightly read from any pulpit in the land, and there would not be left one stone of that meeting-house upon another."

It may be objected that these are what are called "hard sayings"; and that a man, or an education, may be very sufficiently Christian although it leave some of these sayings upon one side. But this is a very gross delusion. Although truth is difficult to state, it is both easy and agreeable to receive, and the mind runs out to meet it ere the phrase be done. The universe, in relation to what any man can say of it, is plain, patent, and staringly comprehensible. In itself, it is a great and travailing ocean, unsounded, unvoyageable, an eternal mystery to man; or, let us say, it is a monstrous and impassable mountain, one side of which, and a few near slopes and foot-hills, we can dimly study with these mortal eyes. But what any man can say of it, even in his highest utterance, must have relation to this little and plain corner, which is no less visible to us than to him. We are looking on the same map; it will go hard if we cannot follow the demonstration. The longest and most abstruse flight of a philosopher becomes clear and shallow, in the flash of a moment, when we suddenly perceive the aspect and drift of his intention. The longest argument is but a finger pointed; once we get our own finger rightly parallel, and we see what the man meant, whether it be a new star or an old street-lamp. And briefly, if a saying is hard to understand, it is because we are thinking of something else.

But to be a true disciple is to think of the same things as our prophet, and to think of different things in the same order. To be of the same mind with another is to see all things in the same perspective; it is not to agree in a few indifferent matters near at hand and not much debated; it is to follow him in his farthest flights, to see the force of his hyperboles, to stand so exactly in the centre of his vision that whatever he may express, your eyes will light at once on the original, that whatever he may see to declare, your mind will at once accept. You do not belong to the school of any philosopher because you agree with him that theft is, on the whole, objectionable, or that the sun is overhead at noon. It is by the hard sayings that discipleship is tested. We are all agreed about the middling and indifferent parts of knowledge and morality; even the most soaring spirits too often take them tamely upon trust. But the man, the philosopher or the moralist, does not stand upon these chance adhesions; and the purpose of any system looks towards those extreme points where it steps valiantly beyond tradition and returns with some covert hint of things outside. Then only can you be certain that the words are not words of course, nor mere echoes of the past; then only are you sure that if he be indicating anything at all, it is a star and not a street-lamp; then only do you touch the heart of the mystery, since it was for these that the author wrote his book.

Now, every now and then, and indeed surprisingly often, Christ finds a word that transcends all commonplace morality; every now and then he quits the beaten track to pioneer the unexpressed, and throws out a pregnant and magnanimous hyperbole; for it is only by some bold poetry of thought that men can be strung up above the level of everyday conceptions to take a broader look upon experience or accept some higher principle of conduct. To a man who is of the same mind that was in Christ, who stands at some centre not too far from his, and looks at the world and conduct from some not dissimilar or, at least, not opposing attitude—or, shortly, to a man who is of Christ's philosophy—every such saying should come home with a thrill of joy and corroboration; he should feel each one below his feet as another sure foundation in the flux of time and chance; each should be another proof that in the torrent of the years and generations, where doctrines and great armaments and empires are swept away and swallowed, he stands immovable, holding by the eternal stars. But alas! at this juncture of the ages it is not so with us; on each and every such occasion our whole fellowship of Christians falls back in disapproving wonder and implicitly denies the saying.

Christians! the farce is impudently broad. Let us stand up in the sight of heaven and confess. The ethics that we hold are those of Benjamin Franklin. *Honesty is the best policy*, is perhaps a hard saying; it is certainly one by which a wise man of these days will not too curiously direct his steps; but I think it shows a glimmer of meaning to even our most dimmed intelligences; I think we perceive a principle behind it; I think, without hyperbole, we are of the same mind that was in Benjamin Franklin.

CHAPTER II

Precepts

BUT, I may be told, we teach the ten commandments, where a world of morals lies condensed, the very pith and epitome of all ethics and religion; and a young man with these precepts engraved upon his mind must follow after profit with some conscience and Christianity of method. A man cannot go very far astray who neither dishonours his parents, nor kills, nor commits adultery, nor steals, nor bears false witness; for these things, rightly thought out, cover a vast field of duty.

Alas! what is a precept? It is at best an illustration; it is case law at the best which can be learned by precept. The letter is not only dead, but killing; the spirit which underlies, and cannot be uttered, alone is true and helpful. This is trite to sickness; but familiarity has a cunning disenchantment; in a day or two she can steal all beauty from the mountain-tops; and the most startling words begin to fall dead upon the ear after several repetitions. If you see a thing too often, you no longer see it; if you hear a thing too often, you no longer hear it. Our attention requires to be surprised; and to carry a fort by assault, or to gain a thoughtful hearing from the ruck of mankind, are feats of about an equal difficulty and must be tried by not dissimilar means. The whole Bible has thus lost its message for the common run of hearers; it has become mere words of course; and the parson may bawl himself scarlet and beat the pulpit like a thing possessed, but his hearers will continue to nod; they are strangely at peace; they know all he has to say; ring the old bell as you choose, it is still the old bell and it cannot startle their composure. And so with this by-word about the letter and the spirit. It is quite true, no doubt; but it has no meaning in the world to any man of us. Alas! it has just this meaning, and neither more nor less: that while the spirit is true, the letter is eternally false.

The shadow of a great oak lies abroad upon the ground at noon, perfect, clear, and stable like the earth. But let a man set himself to mark out the boundary with cords and pegs, and were he never so nimble and never so exact what with the multiplicity of the leaves and the progression of the shadow as it flees before the travelling sun, long ere he has made the circuit the whole figure will have changed. Life may be compared, not to a single tree, but to a great and complicated forest; circumstance is more swiftly changing than a shadow, language much more inexact than the tools of a surveyor; from day to day the trees fall and are renewed; the very essences are fleeting as we look; and the whole world of leaves is swinging tempest-tossed among the winds of time. Look now for your shadows. O man of formulæ, is this a place for you? Have you fitted the spirit to a single case? Alas, in the cycle of the ages when shall such another be proposed for the judgment of man? Now when the sun shines and the winds blow, the wood is filled with an innumerable multitude of shadows, tumultuously tossed and changing; and at every gust the whole carpet leaps and becomes new. Can you or your heart say more?

Look back now, for a moment, on your own brief experience of life; and although you lived it feelingly in your own person, and had every step of conduct burned in by pains and joys upon your memory, tell me what definite lesson does experience hand on from youth to manhood, or from both to age? The settled tenor which first strikes the eye is but the shadow of a delusion. This is gone; that never truly was; and you yourself are altered beyond recognition. Times and men and circumstances change about your changing character, with a speed of which no earthly hurricane affords an image. What was the best yesterday, is it still the best in this changed theatre of a to-morrow? Will your own Past truly guide you in your own violent and unexpected Future? And if this be questionable, with what humble, with what hopeless eyes, should we not watch other men driving beside us on their unknown careers, seeing with unlike eyes, impelled by different gales, doing and suffering in another sphere of things?

And as the authentic clue to such a labyrinth and change of scene, do you offer me these two-score words? these five bald prohibitions? For the moral precepts are no more than five; the first four deal rather with matters of observance than of conduct; the tenth, *Thou shalt not covet*, stands upon another basis, and shall be spoken of ere long. The Jews, to whom they were first given, in the course of years began to find these precepts insufficient; and made an addition of no less than six hundred and fifty others! They hoped to make a pocket-book of reference on morals, which should stand to life in some such relation, say, as Hoyle stands in to the scientific game of whist. The comparison is just, and condemns the design; for those who play by rule will never be more than tolerable players; and you and I would like to play our game in life to the noblest and the most divine advantage. Yet if the Jews took a petty and huckstering view of conduct, what view do we take ourselves, who callously leave youth to go forth into the enchanted forest, full of spells and dire chimæras, with no guidance more complete than is afforded by these five precepts?

Honour thy father and thy mother. Yes, but does that mean to obey? and if so, how long and how far? *Thou shalt not kill*. Yet the very intention and purport of the prohibition may be best fulfilled by killing. *Thou shalt not commit adultery*. But some of the ugliest adulteries are committed in the bed of marriage and under the sanction of religion and law. *Thou shalt not bear false witness.* How? by speech or by silence also? or even by a smile? *Thou shalt not steal.* Ah, that indeed! But what is *to steal?*

To steal? It is another word to be construed; and who is to be our guide? The police will give us one construction, leaving the word only that least minimum of meaning without which society would fall in pieces; but surely we must take some higher sense than this; surely we hope more than a bare subsistence for mankind; surely we wish mankind to prosper and go on from strength to strength, and ourselves to live rightly in the eye of some more exacting potentate than a policeman. The approval or the disapproval of the police must be eternally indifferent to a man who is both valorous and good. There is extreme discomfort, but no shame, in the condemnation of the law. The law represents that modicum of morality which can be squeezed out of the ruck of mankind; but what is that to me, who aim higher and seek to be my own more stringent judge? I observe with pleasure that no brave man has ever given a rush for such considerations. The Japanese have a nobler and more sentimental feeling for this social bond into which we all are born when we come into the world, and whose comforts and protection we all indifferently share throughout our lives:—but even to them, no more than to our Western saints and heroes, does the law of the state supersede the higher law of duty. Without hesitation and without remorse, they transgress the stiffest enactments rather than abstain from doing right. But the accidental superior duty being thus fulfilled, they at once return in allegiance to the common duty of all citizens; and hasten to denounce themselves; and value at an equal rate their just crime and their equally just submission to its punishment.

The evading of the police will not long satisfy an active conscience or a thoughtful head. But to show you how one or the other may trouble a man, and what a vast extent of frontier is left unridden by this invaluable eighth commandment, let me tell you a few pages out of a young man's life.

He was a friend of mine; a young man like others; generous, flighty, as variable as youth itself, but always with some high motions and on the search for higher thoughts of life. I should tell you at once that he thoroughly agrees with the eighth commandment. But he got hold of some unsettling works, the New Testament among others, and this loosened his views of life and led him into many perplexities. As he was the son of a man in a certain position, and well off, my friend had enjoyed from the first the advantages of education, nay, he had been kept alive through a sickly childhood by constant watchfulness, comforts, and change of air; for all of which he was indebted to his father's wealth.

At college he met other lads more diligent than himself, who followed the plough in summer-time to pay their college fees in winter; and this inequality struck him with some force. He was at that age of a conversable temper, and insatiably curious in the aspects of life; and he spent much of his time scraping acquaintance with all classes of man- and womankind. In this way he came upon many depressed ambitions, and many intelligences stunted for want of opportunity; and this also struck him. He began to perceive that life was a handicap upon strange, wrong-sided principles; and not, as he had been told, a fair and equal race. He began to tremble that he himself had been unjustly favoured, when he saw all the avenues of wealth and power and comfort closed against so many of his superiors and equals, and held unwearyingly open before so idle, so desultory, and so dissolute a being as himself. There sat a youth beside him on the college benches, who had only one shirt to his back, and, at intervals sufficiently far apart, must stay at home to have it washed. It was my friend's principle to stay away as often as he dared; for I fear he was no friend to learning. But there was something that came home to him sharply, in this fellow who had to give over study till his shirt was washed, and the scores of others who had never an opportunity at all. *If one of these could take his place*, he thought; and the thought tore away a bandage from his eyes. He was eaten by the shame of his discoveries, and despised himself as an unworthy favourite and a creature of the backstairs of Fortune. He could no longer see without confusion one of these brave young fellows battling up hill against adversity. Had he not filched that fellow's birthright? At best was he not coldly profiting by the injustice of society, and greedily devouring stolen goods? The money, indeed, belonged to his father, who had worked, and thought, and given up his liberty to earn it; but by what justice could the money belong to my friend, who had, as yet, done nothing but help to squander it? A more sturdy honesty, joined to a more even and impartial temperament, would have drawn from these considerations a new force of industry, that this equivocal position might be brought as swiftly as possible to an end, and some good services to mankind justify the appropriation of expense. It was not so with my friend, who was only unsettled and discouraged, and filled full of that trumpeting anger with which young men regard injustices in the first blush of youth; although in a few years they will tamely acquiesce in their existence, and knowingly profit by their complications. Yet all this while he suffered many indignant pangs. And once, when he put on his boots, like any other unripe donkey, to run away from home, it was his best consolation that he was now, at a single plunge, to free himself from the responsibility of this wealth that was not his, and do battle equally against his fellows in the warfare of life.

Some time after this, falling into ill-health, he was sent at great expense to a more favourable climate; and then I think his perplexities were thickest. When he thought of all the other young men of singular promise, upright, good, the prop of families, who must remain at home to die, and with all their possibilities be lost to life and mankind; and how he, by one more unmerited favour, was chosen out from all these others to survive; he felt as if there were no life, no labour, no devotion of soul and body, that could repay and justify these partialities. A religious lady, to whom he communicated these reflections, could see no force in them whatever. "It was God's will," said she. But he knew it was by God's will that Joan of Arc was burnt at Rouen, which cleared neither Bedford nor Bishop Cauchon; and again, by God's will that Christ was crucified outside Jerusalem, which excused neither the rancour of the priests nor the timidity of Pilate. He knew, moreover, that although the possibility of this favour he was now enjoying issued from his circumstances, its acceptance was the act of his own will; and he had accepted it greedily, longing for rest and sunshine. And hence this allegation of God's providence did little to relieve his scruples. I promise you he had a very troubled mind. And I would not laugh if I were you, though while he was thus making mountains out of what you think mole-hills, he were still (as perhaps he was) contentedly practising many other things that to you seem black as hell. Every man is his own judge and mountain-guide through life. There is an old story of a mote and a beam, apparently not true, but worthy perhaps of some consideration. I should, if I were you, give some consideration to these scruples of his, and if I were he, I should do the like by yours; for it is not unlikely that there may be something under both. In the meantime you must hear how my friend acted. Like many invalids, he supposed that he would die. Now should he die, he saw no means of repaying this huge loan which by the hands of his father, mankind had advanced him for his sickness. In that case it would be lost money. So he determined that the advance should be as small as possible; and, so long as he continued to doubt his recovery, lived in an upper room, and grudged himself all but necessaries. But so soon as he began to perceive a change for the better, he felt justified in spending more freely, to speed and brighten his return to health, and trusted in the future to lend a help to mankind, as mankind, out of its treasury, had lent a help to him.

I do not say but that my friend was a little too curious and partial in his view; nor thought too much of himself

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and too little of his parents; but I do say that here are some scruples which tormented my friend in his youth, and still, perhaps, at odd times give him a prick in the midst of his enjoyments, and which after all have some foundation in justice, and point, in their confused way, to some more honourable honesty within the reach of man. And at least, is not this an unusual gloss upon the eighth commandment? And what sort of comfort, guidance, or illumination did that precept afford my friend throughout these contentions? "Thou shalt not steal." With all my heart! But *am* I stealing?

The truly quaint materialism of our view of life disables us from pursuing any transaction to an end. You can make no one understand that his bargain is anything more than a bargain, whereas in point of fact it is a link in the policy of mankind, and either a good or an evil to the world. We have a sort of blindness which prevents us from seeing anything but sovereigns. If one man agrees to give another so many shillings for so many hours' work, and then wilfully gives him a certain proportion of the price in bad money and only the remainder in good, we can see with half an eye that this man is a thief. But if the other spends a certain proportion of the hours in smoking a pipe of tobacco, and a certain other proportion in looking at the sky, or the clock, or trying to recall an air, or in meditation on his own past adventures, and only the remainder in downright work such as he is paid to do, is he, because the theft is one of time and not of money, —is he any the less a thief? The one gave a bad shilling, the other an imperfect hour; but both broke the bargain, and each is a thief. In piece-work, which is what most of us do, the case is none the less plain for being even less material. If you forge a bad knife, you have wasted some of mankind's iron, and then, with unrivalled cynicism, you pocket some of mankind's money for your trouble. Is there any man so blind who cannot see that this is theft? Again if you carelessly cultivate a farm, you have been playing fast and loose with mankind's resources against hunger; there will be less bread in consequence, and for lack of that bread somebody will die next winter: a grim consideration. And you must not hope to shuffle out of blame because you got less money for your less quantity of bread; for although a theft be partly punished, it is none the less a theft for that. You took the farm against competitors; there were others ready to shoulder the responsibility and be answerable for the tale of loaves; but it was you who took it. By the act you came under a tacit bargain with mankind to cultivate that farm with your best endeavour; you were under no superintendence, you were on parole; and you have broke your bargain, and to all who look closely, and yourself among the rest if you have moral eyesight, you are a thief. Or take the case of men of letters. Every piece of work which is not as good as you can make it, which you have palmed off imperfect, meagrely thought, niggardly in execution, upon mankind who is your paymaster on parole and in a sense your pupil, every hasty or slovenly or untrue performance, should rise up against you in the court of your own heart and condemn you for a thief. Have you a salary? If you trifle with your health, and so render yourself less capable for duty, and still touch and still greedily pocket the emolument—what are you but a thief? Have you double accounts? do you by any time-honoured juggle, deceit, or ambiguous process, gain more from those who deal with you than if you were bargaining and dealing face to face in front of God?—What are you but a thief? Lastly, if you fill an office, or produce an article, which, in your heart of hearts, you think a delusion and a fraud upon mankind, and still draw your salary and go through the sham manœuvres of this office, or still book your profits and keep on flooding the world with these injurious goods?—though you were old, and bald, and the first at Church, and a baronet, what are you but a thief? These may seem hard words and mere curiosities of the intellect, in an age when the spirit of honesty is so sparingly cultivated that all business is conducted upon lies and so-called customs of the trade, that not a man bestows two thoughts on the utility or honourableness of his pursuit.

I would say less if I thought less. But looking to my own reason and the right of things, I can only avow that I am a thief myself, and that I passionately suspect my neighbours of the same guilt.

Where did you hear that it was easy to be honest? Do you find that in your Bible? Easy? It is easy to be an ass and follow the multitude, like a blind, besotted bull in a stampede; and that, I am well aware, is what you and Mrs. Grundy mean by being honest. But it will not bear the stress of time nor the scrutiny of conscience. Even before the lowest of all tribunals—before a court of law, whose business it is, not to keep men right, or within a thousand miles of right, but to withhold them from going so tragically wrong that they will pull down the whole jointed fabric of society by their misdeeds—even before a court of law, as we begin to see in these last days, our easy view of following at each other's tails, alike to good and evil, is beginning to be reproved and punished, and declared no honesty at all, but open theft and swindling; and simpletons who have gone on through life with a quiet conscience may learn suddenly, from the lips of a judge, that the custom of the trade may be a custom of the devil. You thought it was easy to be honest. Did you think it was easy to be just and kind and truthful? Did you think the whole duty of aspiring man was as simple as a hornpipe? and you could walk through life like a gentleman and a hero, with no more concern than it takes to go to church or to address a circular? And yet all this time you had the eighth commandment! and, what makes it richer, you would not have broken it for the world!

The truth is, that these commandments by themselves are of little use in private judgment. If compression is what you want, you have their whole spirit compressed into the golden rule; and yet there expressed with more significance, since the law is there spiritually and not materially stated. And in truth, four out of these ten commandments, from the sixth to the ninth, are rather legal than ethical. The police court is their proper home. A magistrate cannot tell whether you love your neighbour

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as yourself, but he can tell more or less whether you have murdered, or stolen, or committed adultery, or held up your hand and testified to that which was not; and these things, for rough practical tests, are as good as can be found. And perhaps, therefore, the best condensation of the Jewish moral law is in the maxims of the priests, "neminem lædere" and "suum cuique tribunere." But all this granted, it becomes only the more plain that they are inadequate in the sphere of personal morality; that while they tell the magistrate roughly when to punish, they can never direct an anxious sinner what to do.

Only Polonius, or the like solemn sort of ass, can offer us a succinct proverb by way of advice and not burst out blushing in our faces. We grant them one and all, and for all that they are worth; it is something above and beyond that we desire. Christ was in general a great enemy to such a way of teaching; we rarely find him meddling with any of these plump commands but it was to open them out, and lift his hearers from the letter to the spirit. For morals are a personal affair; in the war of righteousness every man fights for his own hand; all the six hundred precepts of the Mishna cannot shake my private judgment; my magistracy of myself is an indefeasible charge, and my decisions absolute for the time and case. The moralist is not a judge of appeal, but an advocate who pleads at my tribunal. He has to show not the law, but that the law applies. Can he convince me? then he gains the cause. And thus you find Christ giving various counsels to varying people, and often jealously careful to avoid definite precept. Is he asked, for example, to divide a heritage? He refuses: and the best advice that he will offer is but a paraphrase of that tenth commandment which figures so strangely among the rest. *Take heed, and beware of covetousness.* If you complain that this is vague, I have failed to carry you along with me in my argument. For no definite precept can be more than an illustration, though its truth were resplendent like the sun, and it was announced from heaven by the voice of God. And life is so intricate and changing, that perhaps not twenty times, or perhaps not twice in the ages, shall we find that nice consent of circumstances to which alone it can apply.

CHAPTER III

ALTHOUGH the world and life have in a sense become commonplace to our experience, it is but in an external torpor; the true sentiment slumbers within us; and we have but to reflect on ourselves or our surroundings to rekindle our astonishment. No length of habit can blunt our first surprise. Of the world I have but little to say in this connection; a few strokes shall suffice. We inhabit a dead ember swimming wide in the blank of space, dizzily spinning as it swims, and lighted up from several million miles away by a more horrible hell-fire than was ever conceived by the theological imagination. Yet the dead ember is a green, commodious dwelling-place; and the reverberation of this hell-fire ripens flower and fruit and mildly warms us on summer eves upon the lawn. Far off on all hands other dead embers, other flaming suns, wheel and race in the apparent void; the nearest is out of call; the farthest so far that the heart sickens in the effort to conceive the distance. Shipwrecked seamen on the deep, though they bestride but the truncheon of a boom, are safe and near at home compared with mankind on its bullet. Even to us who have known no other, it seems a strange, if not an appalling, place of residence.

But far stranger is the resident, man, a creature compact of wonders that, after centuries of custom, is still wonderful to himself. He inhabits a body which he is continually outliving, discarding, and renewing. Food and sleep, by an unknown alchemy, restore his spirits and the freshness of his countenance. Hair grows on him like grass; his eyes, his brain, his sinews, thirst for action; he joys to see and touch and hear, to partake the sun and wind, to sit down and intently ponder on his astonishing attributes and situation, to rise up and run to perform the strange and revolting round of physical functions. The sight of a flower, the note of a bird, will often move him deeply; yet he looks unconcerned on the impassable distances and portentous bonfires of the universe. He comprehends, he designs, he tames nature, rides the sea, ploughs, climbs the air in a balloon, makes vast inquiries, begins interminable labours, joins himself into federations and populous cities, spends his days to deliver the ends of the earth or to benefit unborn posterity; and yet knows himself for a piece of unsurpassed fragility and the creature of a few days. His sight, which conducts him, which takes notice of the farthest stars, which is miraculous in every way and a thing defying explanation or belief, is yet lodged in a piece of jelly, and can be extinguished with a touch. His heart, which all through life so indomitably, so athletically labours, is but a capsule, and may be stopped with a pin. His whole body, for all its savage energies, its leaping and its winged desires, may yet be tamed and conquered by a draught of air or a sprinkling of cold dew. What he calls death, which is the seeming arrest of everything, and the ruin and hateful transformation of the visible body, lies in wait for him outwardly in a thousand accidents and grows up in secret diseases from within. He is still learning to be a man when his faculties are already beginning to decline; he has not yet understood himself or his position before he inevitably dies. And yet this mad, chimerical creature can take no thought of his last end, lives as though he were eternal, plunges with his vulnerable body into the shock of war, and daily affronts death with unconcern. He cannot take a step without pain or pleasure. His life is a tissue of sensations, which he distinguishes as they seem to come more directly from himself or his surroundings. He is conscious of himself as a joyer or a sufferer, as that which craves, chooses, and is satisfied; conscious of his surroundings as it were of an inexhaustible purveyor, the source of aspects, inspirations, wonders, cruel knocks and transporting caresses. Thus he goes on his way, stumbling among delights and agonies.

Matter is a far-fetched theory, and materialism is without a root in man. To him everything is important in the degree to which it moves him. The telegraph wires and posts, the electricity speeding from clerk to clerk, the clerks, the glad or sorrowful import of the message, and the paper on which it is finally brought to him at home, are all equally facts, all equally exist for man. A word or a thought can wound him as acutely as a knife of steel. If he thinks he is loved, he will rise up and glory to himself, although he be in a distant land and short of necessary bread. Does he think he is not loved ?—he may have the woman at his beck, and there is not a joy for him in all the world. Indeed, if we are to make any account of this figment of reason, the distinction between material and immaterial, we shall conclude that the life of each man as an individual is immaterial, although the continuation and prospects of mankind as a race turn upon material conditions. The physical business of each man's body is transacted for him ; like a Sybarite, he has attentive valets in his own viscera ; he breathes, he sweats, he digests without an effort, or so much as a consenting volition ; for the most part he even eats, not with a wakeful consciousness, but as it were between two thoughts. His life is centred among other and more important considerations ; touch him in his honour or his love, creatures of the imagination which attach him to mankind or to an individual man or woman ; cross him in his piety which connects his soul with heaven ; and he turns from his food, he loathes his breath, and with a magnanimous emotion cuts the knots of his existence and frees himself at a blow from the web of pains and pleasures.

It follows that man is twofold at least ; that he is not a rounded and autonomous empire ; but that in the same body with him there dwell other powers, tributary but independent. If I now behold one walking in a garden, curiously coloured and illuminated by the sun, digesting his food with elaborate chemistry, breathing, circulating blood, directing himself by the sight of his eyes, accommodating his body by a thousand delicate balancings to the wind and the uneven surface of the path, and all the time, perhaps, with his mind engaged about America, or the dog-star, or the attributes of God—what am I to say, or how am I to describe the thing I see? Is that truly a man, in the rigorous meaning of the word? or is it not a man and something else? What, then, are we to count the centre-bit and axle of a being so variously compounded? It is a question much debated. Some read his history in a certain intricacy of nerve and the success of successive digestions; others find him an exiled piece of heaven blown upon and determined by the breath of God; and both schools of theorists will scream like scalded children at a word of doubt. Yet either of these views, however plausible, is beside the question; either may be right, and I care not; I ask a more particular answer, and to a more immediate point. What is the man? There is Something that was before hunger and that remains behind after a meal. It may or may not be engaged in any given act or passion, but when it is, it changes, heightens, and sanctifies. Thus it is not engaged in lust, where satisfaction ends the chapter; and it is engaged in love, where no satisfaction can blunt the edge of the desire, and where age, sickness, or alienation may deface what was desirable without diminishing the sentiment. This something, which is the man, is a permanence which abides through the vicissitudes of passion, now overwhelmed and now triumphant, now unconscious of itself in the immediate distress of appetite or pain, now rising unclouded above all. So, to the man, his own central self fades and grows clear again amid the tumult of the senses, like a revolving Pharos in the night. It is forgotten; it is hid, it seems, for ever; and yet in the next calm hour he shall behold himself once more, shining and unmoved among changes and storm.

Mankind, in the sense of the creeping mass that is born and eats, that generates and dies, is but the aggregate of the outer and lower sides of man. This inner consciousness, this lantern alternately obscured and shining, to and by which the individual exists and must order his conduct, is something special to himself and not common to the race. His joys delight, his sorrows wound him, according as *this* is interested or indifferent in the affair; according as they arise in an imperial war or in a broil conducted by the tributary chieftains of the mind. He may lose all, and *this* not suffer; he may lose what is materially a trifle, and *this* leap in his bosom with a cruel pang. I do not speak of it to hardened theorists: the living man knows keenly what it is I mean.

"Perceive at last that thou hast in thee something better and more divine than the things which cause the various effects, and, as it were, pull thee by the strings. What is that now in thy mind? is it fear, or suspicion, or desire, or anything of that kind?" Thus far Marcus Aurelius, in one of the most notable passages in any book. Here is a question worthy to be answered. What is in thy mind? What is the utterance of your inmost self when, in a quiet hour, it can be heard intelligibly? It is something beyond the compass of your thinking, inasmuch as it is yourself; but is it not of a higher spirit than you had dreamed betweenwhiles, and erect above all base considerations? This soul seems hardly touched with our infirmities; we can find in it certainly no fear, suspicion, or desire; we are only conscious—and that as though we read it in the eyes of some one else—of a great and unqualified readiness. A readiness to what? to pass over and look beyond the objects of desire and fear, for something else. And this something else? this something which is apart from desire and fear, to which all the kingdoms of the world and the immediate death of the body are alike indifferent and beside the point, and which yet regards conduct—by what name are we to call it? It may be the love of God; or it may be an inherited (and certainly well-concealed) instinct to preserve self and propagate the race; I am not, for the moment, averse to either theory; but it will save time to call it righteousness. By so doing I intend no subterfuge to beg a question; I am indeed ready, and more than willing, to accept the rigid consequence, and lay aside, as far as the treachery of the reason will permit, all former meanings attached to the word *righteousness*. What is right is that for which a man's central self is ever ready to sacrifice immediate or distant interests; what is wrong is what the central self discards or rejects as incompatible with the fixed design of righteousness.

To make this admission is to lay aside all hope of definition. That which is right upon this theory is intimately dictated to each man by himself, but can never be rigorously set forth in language, and never, above all, imposed upon another. The conscience has, then, a vision like that of the eyes, which is incommunicable, and for the most part illuminates none but its possessor. When many people perceive the same or any cognate facts, they agree upon a word as symbol; and hence we have such words as *tree*, *star*, *love*, *honour*, or *death*; hence also we have this word *right*, which, like the others, we all understand, most of us understand differently, and none can express succinctly otherwise. Yet even on the straitest view, we can make some steps towards comprehension of our own superior thoughts. For it is an incredible and most bewildering fact that a man, through life, is on variable terms with himself; he is aware of tiffs and reconciliations; the intimacy is at times almost suspended, at times it is renewed again with joy. As we said before, his inner self or soul appears to him by successive revelations, and is frequently obscured. It is from a study of these alternations that we can alone hope to discover, even dimly, what seems right and what seems wrong to this veiled prophet of ourself.

All that is in the man in the larger sense, what we call impression as well as what we call intuition, so far as my argument looks, we must accept. It is not wrong to desire food, or exercise, or beautiful surroundings, or the love of sex, or interest which is the food of the mind. All these are craved; all these should be craved; to none of these in itself does the soul demur; where there comes an undeniable want, we recognise a demand of nature. Yet we know that these natural demands may be superseded; for the demands which are common to mankind make but a shadowy consideration in comparison to the demands of the individual soul. Food is almost the first prerequisite; and yet a high character will go without food to the ruin and death of the body rather than gain it in a manner which the spirit disavows. Pascal laid aside mathematics; Origen doctored his body with a knife; every day some one is thus mortifying his dearest interests and desires, and, in Christ's words, entering maim into the kingdom of heaven. This is to supersede the lesser and less harmonious affections by renunciation; and though by this ascetic path we may get to heaven, we cannot get thither a whole and perfect man. But there is another way, to supersede them by reconciliation, in which the soul and all the faculties and senses pursue a common route and share in one desire. Thus, man is tormented by a very imperious physical desire; it spoils his rest, it is not to be denied; the doctors will tell you, not I, how it is a physical need, like the want of food or slumber. In the satisfaction of this desire, as it first appears, the soul sparingly takes part; nay, it oft unsparingly regrets and disapproves the satisfaction. But let the man learn to love a woman as far as he is capable of love; and for this random affection of the body there is substituted a steady determination, a consent of all his powers and faculties, which supersedes, adopts, and commands the other. The desire survives, strengthened, perhaps, but taught obedience, and changed in scope and character. Life is no longer a tale of betrayals and regrets; for the man now lives as a whole; his consciousness now moves on uninterrupted like a river; through all the extremes and ups and downs of passion, he remains approvingly conscious of himself.

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Now to me, this seems a type of that rightness which the soul demands. It demands that we shall not live alternately with our opposing tendencies in continual see-saw of passion and disgust, but seek some path on which the tendencies shall no longer oppose, but serve each other to a common end. It demands that we shall not pursue broken ends, but great and comprehensive purposes, in which soul and body may unite like notes in a harmonious chord. That were indeed a way of peace and pleasure, that were indeed a heaven upon earth. It does not demand, however, or, to speak in measure, it does not demand of me, that I should starve my appetites for no purpose under heaven but as a purpose in itself; or, in a weak despair, pluck out the eye that I have not yet learned to guide and enjoy with wisdom. The soul demands unity of purpose, not the dismemberment of man; it seeks to roll up all his strength and sweetness, all his passion and wisdom, into one, and make of him a perfect man exulting in perfection. To conclude ascetically is to give up, and not to solve, the problem. The ascetic and the creeping hog, although they are at different poles, have equally failed in life. The one has sacrificed his crew; the other brings back his seamen in a cock-boat, and has lost the ship. I believe there are not many sea-captains who would plume themselves on either result as a success.

But if it is righteousness thus to fuse together our divisive impulses and march with one mind through life, there is plainly one thing more unrighteous than all others, and one declension which is irretrievable and draws on the rest. And this is to lose consciousness of oneself. In the best of times, it is but by flashes, when our whole nature is clear, strong, and conscious, and events conspire to leave us free, that we enjoy communion with our soul. At the worst, we are so fallen and passive that we may say shortly we have none. An arctic torpor seizes upon men. Although built of nerves, and set adrift in a stimulating world, they develop a tendency to go bodily to sleep; consciousness becomes engrossed among the reflex and mechanical parts of life, and soon loses both the will and power to look higher considerations in the face. This is ruin; this is the last failure in life; this is temporal damnation, damnation on the spot and without the form of judgment. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and *lose himself?*"

It is to keep a man awake, to keep him alive to his own soul and its fixed design of righteousness, that the better part of moral and religious education is directed; not only that of words and doctors, but the sharp ferule of calamity under which we are all God's scholars till we die. If, as teachers, we are to say anything to the purpose, we must say what will remind the pupil of his soul; we must speak that soul's dialect; we must talk of life and conduct as his soul would have him think of them. If, from some conformity between us and the pupil, or perhaps among all men, we do in truth speak in such a dialect and express such views, beyond question we shall touch in him a spring; beyond question he will recognise the dialect as one that he himself has spoken in his better hours; beyond question he will cry, "I had forgotten, but now I remember; I too have eyes, and I had forgot to use them! I too have a soul of my own, arrogantly upright, and to that I will listen and conform." In short, say to him anything that he has once thought, or been upon the point of thinking, or show him any view of life that he has once clearly seen, or been upon the point of clearly seeing; and you have done your part and may leave him to complete the education for himself.

Now the view taught at the present time seems to me to want greatness; and the dialect in which alone it can be intelligibly uttered is not the dialect of my soul. It is a sort of postponement of life; nothing quite is, but something different is to be; we are to keep our eyes upon the indirect from the cradle to the grave. We are to regulate our conduct not by desire, but by a politic eye upon the future; and to value acts as they will bring us money or good opinion; as they will bring us, in one word, *profit*. We must be what is called respectable, and offend no one by our carriage; it will not do to make oneself conspicuous—who knows? even in virtue? says the Christian parent! And we must be what is called prudent and make money; not only because it is pleasant to have money, but because that also is a part of respectability, and we cannot hope to be received in society without decent possessions. Received in society! as if that were the kingdom of heaven! There is dear Mr. So-and-so;—look at him!—so much respected—so much looked up to—quite the Christian merchant! And we must cut our conduct as strictly as possible after the pattern of Mr. So-and-so; and lay our whole lives to make money and be strictly decent. Besides these holy injunctions, which form by far the greater part of a youth's training in our Christian homes, there are at least two other doctrines. We are to live just now as well as we can, but scrape at last into heaven, where we shall be good. We are to worry through the week in a lay, disreputable way, but, to make matters square, live a different life on Sunday.

The train of thought we have been following gives us a key to all these positions, without stepping aside to justify them on their own ground. It is because we have been disgusted fifty times with physical squalls, and fifty times torn between conflicting impulses, that we teach people this indirect and tactical procedure in life, and to judge by remote consequences instead of the immediate face of things. The very desire to act as our own souls would have us, coupled with a pathetic disbelief in ourselves, moves us to follow the example of others; perhaps, who knows? they may be on the right track; and the more our patterns are in number, the better seems the chance; until, if we be acting in concert with a whole civilised nation, there are surely a majority of chances that we must be acting right. And again, how true it is that we can never behave as we wish in this tormented sphere, and can only aspire to different and more favourable circumstances, in order to stand out and be ourselves wholly and rightly! And yet once more, if in the hurry and pressure of affairs and passions you tend to nod and become drowsy, here are twenty-four hours of Sunday set apart for you to hold counsel with your soul and look around you on the possibilities of life.

This is not, of course, all that is to be, or even should be, said for these doctrines. Only, in the course of this chapter, the reader and I have agreed upon a few catchwords, and been looking at morals on a certain system; it was a pity to lose an opportunity of testing the catchwords, and seeing whether, by this system as well as by others, current doctrines could show any probable justification. If the doctrines had come too badly out of the trial, it would have condemned the system. Our sight of the world is very narrow; the mind but a pedestrian instrument; there's nothing new under the sun, as Solomon says, except the man himself; and though that changes the aspect of everything else, yet he must see the same things as other people, only from a different side.

And now, having admitted so much, let us turn to criticism.

If you teach a man to keep his eyes upon what others think of him, unthinkingly to lead the life and hold the principles of the majority of his contemporaries, you must discredit in his eyes the one authoritative voice of his own soul. He may be a docile citizen; he will never be a man. It is ours, on the other hand, to disregard this babble and chattering of other men better and worse than we are, and to walk straight before us by what light we have. They may be right; but so, before heaven, are we. They may know; but we know also, and by that knowledge we must stand or fall. There is such a thing as loyalty to a man's own better self; and from those who have not that, God help me, how am I to look for loyalty to others? The most dull, the most imbecile, at a certain moment turn around, at a certain point will hear no further argument, but stand unflinching by their own dumb, irrational sense of right. It is not only by steel or fire, but through contempt and blame, that the martyr fulfils the calling of his dear soul. Be glad if you are not tried by such extremities. But although all the world ranged themselves in one line to tell you "This is wrong," be you your own faithful vassal and the ambassador of God—throw down the glove and answer, "This is right." Do you think you are only declaring yourself? Perhaps in some dim way, like a child who delivers a message not fully understood, you are opening wider the straits of prejudice and preparing mankind for some truer and more spiritual grasp of truth; perhaps, as you stand forth for your own judgment, you are covering a thousand weak ones with your body; perhaps, by this declaration alone, you have avoided the guilt of false witness against humanity and the little ones unborn. It is good, I believe, to be respectable, but much nobler to respect oneself and utter the voice of God. God, if there be any God, speaks daily in a new language by the tongues of men; the thoughts and habits of each fresh generation and each new-coined spirit throw another light upon the universe and contain another commentary on the printed Bibles; every scruple, every true dissent, every glimpse of something new, is a letter of God's alphabet; and though there is a grave responsibility for all who speak, is there none for those who unrighteously keep silence and conform? Is not that also to conceal and cloak God's counsel? And how should we regard the man of science who suppressed all facts that would not tally with the orthodoxy of the hour?

Wrong? You are as surely wrong as the sun rose this morning round the revolving shoulder of the world. Not truth, but truthfulness, is the good of your endeavour. For when will men receive that first part and prerequisite of truth, that, by the order of things, by the greatness of the universe, by the darkness and partiality of man's experience, by the inviolate secrecy of God kept close in His most open revelations, every man is, and to the end of the ages must be, wrong? Wrong to the universe; wrong to mankind; wrong to God. And yet in another sense, and that plainer and nearer, every man of men, who wishes truly, must be right. He is right to himself, and in the measure of his sagacity and candour. That let him do in all sincerity and zeal, not sparing a thought for contrary opinions; that for what it is worth, let him proclaim. Be not afraid; although he be wrong, so also is the dead, stuffed Dagon he insults. For the voice of God, whatever it is, is not that stammering, inept tradition which the people holds. These truths survive in travesty, swamped in a world of spiritual darkness and confusion; and what a few comprehend and faithfully hold, the many, in their dead jargon, repeat, degrade, and misinterpret.

So far of Respectability: what the Covenanters used to call "rank conformity": the deadliest gag and wet blanket that can be laid on men. And now of Profit. And this doctrine is perhaps the more redoubtable, because it harms all sorts of men; not only the heroic and self-reliant, but the obedient, cowlike squadrons. A man, by this doctrine, looks to consequences at the second or third, or fiftieth turn. He chooses his end, and for that, with wily turns and through a great sea of tedium, steers this mortal bark. There may be political wisdom in such a view; but I am persuaded there can spring no great moral zeal. To look thus obliquely upon life is the very recipe for moral slumber. Our intention and endeavour should be directed, not on some vague end of money or applause, which shall come to us by a ricochet in a month or a year or twenty years, but on the act itself: not on the approval of others, but on the rightness of that act. At every instant, at every step in life, the point has to be decided, our soul has to be saved, heaven has to be gained or lost. At every step our spirits must applaud, at every step we must set down the foot and sound the trumpet. "This have I done," we must say; "right or wrong, this have I done, in unfeigned honour of intention, as to myself and God." The profit of every act should be this, that it was right for us to do it. Any other profit than that, if it involved a kingdom or the woman I love, ought, if I were God's upright soldier, to leave me untempted.

It is the mark of what we call a righteous decision, that it is made directly and for its own sake. The whole man, mind and body, having come to an agreement, tyrannically dictates conduct. There are two dispositions eternally opposed: that in which we recognise that one thing is wrong and another right, and that in which, not seeing any clear distinction, we fall back on the consideration of consequences. The truth is, by the scope of our present teaching, nothing is thought very wrong and nothing very right, except a few actions which have the disadvantage of being disrespectable when found out ; the more serious part of men inclining to think all things *rather wrong*, the more jovial to suppose them *right enough for practical purposes*. I will engage my head, they do not find that view in their own hearts ; they have taken it up in a dark despair ; they are but troubled sleepers talking in their sleep. The soul, or my soul at least, thinks very distinctly upon many points of right and wrong, and often differs flatly with what is held out as the thought of corporate humanity in the code of society or the code of law. Am I to suppose myself a monster ? I have only to read books, the Christian Gospels for example, to think myself a monster no longer ; and instead I think the mass of people are merely speaking in their sleep.

It is a commonplace, enshrined, if I mistake not, even in school copy-books, that honour is to be sought and not fame. I ask no other admission ; we are to seek honour, upright walking with our own conscience every hour of the day, and not fame, the consequence, the far-off reverberation of our footsteps. The walk, not the rumour of the walk, is what concerns righteousness. Better disrespectable honour than dishonourable fame. Better useless or seemingly hurtful honour, than dishonour ruling empires and filling the mouths of thousands. For the man must walk by what he sees, and leave the issue with God who made him and taught him by the fortune of his life. You would not dishonour yourself for money ; which is at least tangible ; would you do it, then, for a doubtful forecast in politics, or another person's theory in morals ?

So intricate is the scheme of our affairs, that no man can calculate the bearing of his own behaviour even on those immediately around him, how much less upon the world at large or on succeeding generations ! To walk by external prudence and the rule of consequences would require not a man, but God. All that we know to guide us in this changing labyrinth is our soul with its fixed design of righteousness, and a few old precepts which commend themselves to that. The precepts are vague when we endeavour to apply them; consequences are more entangled than a wisp of string, and their confusion is unrestingly in change; we must hold to what we know and walk by it. We must walk by faith, indeed, and not by knowledge.

You do not love another because he is wealthy or wise or eminently respectable: you love him because you love him; that is love, and any other only a derision and grimace. It should be the same with all our actions. If we were to conceive a perfect man, it should be one who was never torn between conflicting impulses, but who, on the absolute consent of all his parts and faculties, submitted in every action of his life to a self-dictation as absolute and unreasoned as that which bids him love one woman and be true to her till death. But we should not conceive him as sagacious, ascetical, playing off his appetites against each other, turning the wing of public respectable immorality instead of riding it directly down, or advancing towards his end through a thousand sinister compromises and considerations. The one man might be wily, might be adroit, might be wise, might be respectable, might be gloriously useful; it is the other man who would be good.

The soul asks honour and not fame; to be upright, not to be successful; to be good, not prosperous; to be essentially, not outwardly, respectable. Does your soul ask profit? Does it ask money? Does it ask the approval of the indifferent herd? I believe not. For my own part, I want but little money, I hope; and I do not want to be decent at all, but to be good.

CHAPTER IV

WE have spoken of that supreme self-dictation which keeps varying from hour to hour in its dictates with the variation of events and circumstances. Now, for us, that is ultimate. It may be founded on some reasonable process, but it is not a process which we can follow or comprehend. And moreover the dictation is not continuous, or not continuous except in very lively and well-living natures; and betweenwhiles we must brush along without it. Practice is a more intricate and desperate business than the toughest theorising; life is an affair of cavalry, where rapid judgment and prompt action are alone possible and right. As a matter of fact, there is no one so upright but he is influenced by the world's chatter; and no one so headlong but he requires to consider consequences and to keep an eye on profit. For the soul adopts all affections and appetites without exception, and cares only to combine them for some common purpose which shall interest all. Now, respect for the opinion of others, the study of consequences and the desire of power and comfort, are all undeniably factors in the nature of man; and the more undeniably since we find that, in our current doctrines, they have swallowed up the others and are thought to conclude in themselves all the worthy parts of man. These, then, must also be suffered to affect conduct in the practical domain, much or little according as they are forcibly or feebly present to the mind of each. ✓ 29.1.

Now, a man's view of the universe is mostly a view of the civilised society in which he lives. Other men and women are so much more grossly and so much more intimately palpable to his perceptions, that they stand between him and all the rest; they are larger to his eye than the sun, he hears them more plainly than thunder; with them, by them, and for them, he must live and die. And hence the laws that affect his intercourse with his fellow-men, although merely customary and the creatures of a generation, are more clearly and continually before his mind than those which bind him into the eternal system of things, support him in his upright progress on this whirling ball, or keep up the fire of his bodily life. And hence it is that money stands in the first rank of considerations and so powerfully affects the choice. For our society is built with money for mortar; money is present in every joint of circumstance ; it might be named the social atmosphere, since, in society, it is by that alone that men continue to live, and only through that or chance that they can reach or affect one another. Money gives us food, shelter, and privacy ; it permits us to be clean in person, opens for us the doors of the theatre, gains us books for study or pleasure, enables us to help the distresses of others, and puts us above necessity so that we can choose the best in life. If we love, it enables us to meet and live with the loved one, or even to prolong her health and life ; if we have scruples, it gives us an opportunity to be honest ; if we have any bright designs, here is what will smooth the way to their accomplishment. Penury is the worst slavery, and will soon lead to death.

But money is only a means ; it presupposes a man to use it. The rich can go where he pleases, but perhaps please himself nowhere. He can buy a library or visit the whole world, but perhaps has neither patience to read nor intelligence to see. The table may be loaded, and the appetite wanting ; the purse may be full, and the heart empty. He may have gained the world and lost himself ; and with all his wealth around him, in a great house and spacious and beautiful demesne, he may live as blank a life as any tattered ditcher. Without an appetite, without an aspiration, void of appreciation, bankrupt of desire and hope, there, in his great house, let him sit and look upon his fingers. It is perhaps a more fortunate destiny to have a taste for collecting shells than to be born a millionaire. Although neither is to be despised, it is always better policy to learn an interest than to make a thousand pounds ; for the money will soon be spent, or perhaps you may feel no joy in spending it ; but the interest remains imperishable and ever new. To become a botanist, a geologist, a social philosopher, an antiquary, or an artist, is to enlarge one's possessions in the universe by an incalculably higher degree, and by a far surer sort of property, than to purchase a farm of many acres. You had perhaps two thousand a year before the transaction ; perhaps you have two thousand five hundred after it. That represents your gain in the one case. But in the other, you have thrown down a barrier which concealed significance and beauty. The blind man has learned to see. The prisoner has opened up a window in his cell and beholds enchanting prospects; he will never again be a prisoner as he was; he can watch clouds and changing season, ships on the river, travellers on the road, and the stars at night; happy prisoner! his eyes have broken jail! And again he who has learned to love an art or science has wisely laid up riches against the day of riches; if prosperity come, he will not enter poor into his inheritance; he will not slumber and forget himself in the lap of money, or spend his hours in counting idle treasures, but be up and briskly doing; he will have the true alchemic touch, which is not that of Midas, but which transmutes dead money into living delight and satisfaction. *Être et pas avoir*—to be, not to possess—that is the problem of life. To be wealthy, a rich nature is the first requisite and money but the second. To be of a quick and healthy blood, to share in all honourable curiosities, to be rich in admiration and free from envy, to rejoice greatly in the good of others, to love with such generosity of heart that your love is still a dear possession in absence or unkindness—these are the gifts of fortune which money cannot buy and without which money can buy nothing. For what can a man possess, or what can he enjoy, except himself? If he enlarge his nature, it is then that he enlarges his estates. If his nature be happy and valiant, he will enjoy the universe as if it were his park and orchard.

But money is not only to be spent; it has also to be earned. It is not merely a convenience or a necessary in social life; but it is the coin in which mankind pays his wages to the individual man. And from this side, the question of money has a very different scope and application. For no man can be honest who does not work. Service for service. If the farmer buys corn, and the labourer ploughs and reaps, and the baker sweats in his hot bakery, plainly you who eat must do something in your turn. It is not enough to take off your hat, or to thank God upon your knees for the admirable constitution of society and your own convenient situation in its upper and more ornamental stories. Neither is it enough to buy the loaf with a sixpence; for then you are only changing the point of the inquiry; and you must first have *bought the sixpence*. Service for service; how have you bought your sixpences? A man of spirit desires certainty in a thing of such a nature; he must see to it that there is some reciprocity between him and mankind; that he pays his expenditure in service; that he has not a lion's share in profit and a drone's in labour; and is not a sleeping partner and mere costly incubus on the great mercantile concern of mankind.

Services differ so widely with different gifts, and some are so inappreciable to external tests, that this is not only a matter for the private conscience, but one which even there must be leniently and trustfully considered. For remember how many serve mankind who do no more than meditate; and how many are precious to their friends for no more than a sweet and joyous temper. To perform the function of a man of letters it is not necessary to write; nay, it is perhaps better to be a living book. So long as we love we serve; so long as we are loved by others, I would almost say that we are indispensable; and no man is useless while he has a friend. The true services of life are inestimable in money, and are never paid. Kind words and caresses, high and wise thoughts, humane designs, tender behaviour to the weak and suffering, and all the charities of man's existence, are neither bought nor sold.

Yet the dearest and readiest, if not the most just, criterion of a man's services, is the wage that mankind pays him or, briefly, what he earns. There at least there can be no ambiguity. St. Paul is fully and freely entitled to his earnings as a tent-maker, and Socrates fully and freely entitled to his earnings as a sculptor, although the true business of each was not only something different, but something which remained unpaid. A man cannot forget that he is not superintended, and serves mankind on parole. He would like, when challenged by his own conscience, to reply: " I have done so much work, and no less, with my own hands and brain, and taken so much profit, and no more, for my own personal delight." And though St. Paul, if he had possessed a private fortune, would probably have scorned to waste his time in making tents, yet of all sacrifices to public opinion none can be more easily pardoned than that by which a man, already spiritually useful to the world, should restrict the field of his chief usefulness to perform services more apparent, and possess a livelihood that neither stupidity nor malice could call in question. Like all sacrifices to public opinion and mere external decency, this would certainly be wrong; for the soul should rest contented with its own approval and indissuadably pursue its own calling. Yet, so grave and delicate is the question, that a man may well hesitate before he decides it for himself; he may well fear that he sets too high a valuation on his own endeavours after good; he may well condescend upon a humbler duty, where others than himself shall judge the service and proportion the wage.

And yet it is to this very responsibility that the rich are born. They can shuffle off the duty on no other; they are their own paymasters on parole; and must pay themselves fair wages and no more. For I suppose that in the course of ages, and through reform and civil war and invasion, mankind was pursuing some other and more general design than to set one or two Englishmen of the nineteenth century beyond the reach of needs and duties. Society was scarce put together, and defended with so much eloquence and blood, for the convenience of two or three millionaires and a few hundred other persons of wealth and position. It is plain that if mankind thus acted and suffered during all these generations, they hoped some benefit, some ease, some well-being, for themselves and their descendants; that if they supported law and order, it was to secure fair-play for all; that if they denied themselves in the present, they must have had some designs upon the future. Now, a great hereditary fortune is a miracle of man's wisdom and mankind's forbearance; it has not only been amassed and handed down, it has been suffered to be amassed and handed down; and surely in such a consideration as this, its possessor should find only a new spur to activity and honour, that with all this power of service he should not prove unserviceable, and that this mass of treasure should return in benefits upon the race. If he had twenty, or thirty, or a hundred thousand at his banker's, or if all Yorkshire or all California were his to manage or to sell, he would still be morally penniless, and have the world to begin like Whittington, until he had found some way of serving mankind. His wage is physically in his own hand; but, in honour, that wage must still be earned. He is only steward on parole of what is called his fortune. He must honourably perform his stewardship. He must estimate his own services and allow himself a salary in proportion, for that will be one among his functions. And while he will then be free to spend that salary, great or little, on his own private pleasures, the rest of his fortune he but holds and disposes under trust for mankind; it is not his, because he has not earned it; it cannot be his, because his services have already been paid; but year by year it is his to distribute, whether to help individuals whose birthright and outfit have been swallowed up in his, or to further public works and institutions.

At this rate, short of inspiration, it seems hardly possible to be both rich and honest; and the millionaire is under a far more continuous temptation to thieve than the labourer who gets his shilling daily for despicable toils. Are you surprised? It is even so. And you repeat it every Sunday in your churches. "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." I have heard this and similar texts ingeniously explained away and brushed from the path of the aspiring Christian by the tender Great-heart of the parish. One excellent clergyman told us that the "eye of a needle" meant a low, Oriental postern through which camels could not pass till they were unloaded—which is very likely just;

and then went on, bravely confounding the "kingdom of God" with heaven, the future paradise, to show that of course no rich person could expect to carry his riches beyond the grave—which, of course, he could not and never did. Various greedy sinners of the congregation drank in the comfortable doctrine with relief. It was worth the while having come to church that Sunday morning! All was plain. The Bible, as usual, meant nothing in particular; it was merely an obscure and figurative school copy-book; and if a man were only respectable, he was a man after God's own heart.

Alas! I fear not. And though this matter of a man's services is one for his own conscience, there are some cases in which it is difficult to restrain the mind from judging. Thus I shall be very easily persuaded that a man has earned his daily bread; and if he has but a friend or two to whom his company is delightful at heart, I am more than persuaded at once. But it will be very hard to persuade me that any one has earned an income of a hundred thousand. What he is to his friends, he still would be if he were made penniless to-morrow; for as to the courtiers of luxury and power, I will neither consider them friends, nor indeed consider them at all. What he does for mankind there are most likely hundreds who would do the same, as effectually for the race and as pleasurably to themselves, for the merest fraction of this monstrous wage. Why it is paid, I am, therefore, unable to conceive, and as the man pays it himself, out of funds in his detention, I have a certain backwardness to think him honest.

At least, we have gained a very obvious point: that *what a man spends upon himself, he shall have earned by services to the race*. Thence flows a principle for the outset of life, which is a little different from that taught in the present day. I am addressing the middle and the upper classes; those who have already been fostered and prepared for life at some expense; those who have some choice before them, and can pick professions; and above all, those who are what is called independent, and need do nothing unless pushed by honour or ambition. In this particular the poor are happy; among them, when a lad comes to his strength, he must take the work that offers, and can take it with an easy conscience. But in the richer classes the question is complicated by the number of opportunities and a variety of considerations. Here, then, this principle of ours comes in helpfully. The young man has to seek, not a road to wealth, but an opportunity of service; not money, but honest work. If he has some strong propensity, some calling of nature, some overweening interest in any special field of industry, inquiry, or art, he will do right to obey the impulse; and that for two reasons: the first external, because there he will render the best services; the second personal, because a demand of his own nature is to him without appeal whenever it can be satisfied with the consent of his other faculties and appetites. If he has no such elective taste, by the very principle on which he chooses any pursuit at all he must choose the most honest and serviceable, and not the most highly remunerated. We have here an external problem, not from or to ourself, but flowing from the constitution of society; and we have our own soul with its fixed design of righteousness. All that can be done is to present the problem in proper terms, and leave it to the soul of the individual. Now the problem to the poor is one of necessity: to earn wherewithal to live, they must find remunerative labour. But the problem to the rich is one of honour: having the wherewithal, they must find serviceable labour. Each has to earn his daily bread: the one, because he has not yet got it to eat; the other, who has already eaten it, because he has not yet earned it. Of course, what is true of bread is true of luxuries and comforts, whether for the body or the mind. But the consideration of luxuries leads us to a new aspect of the whole question, and to a second proposition no less true, and maybe no less startling, than the last.

At the present day, we, of the easier classes, are in a state of surfeit and disgrace after meat. Plethora has filled us with indifference; and we are covered from head to foot with the callosities of habitual opulence. Born into what is called a certain rank, we live, as the saying is, up to our station. We squander without enjoyment, because our fathers squandered. We eat of the best, not from delicacy, but from brazen habit. We do not keenly enjoy or eagerly desire the presence of a luxury; we are unaccustomed to its absence. And not only do we squander money from habit, but still more pitifully waste it in ostentation. I can think of no more melancholy disgrace for a creature who professes either reason or pleasure for his guide, than to spend the smallest fraction of his income upon that which he does not desire; and to keep a carriage in which you do not wish to drive, or a butler of whom you are afraid, is a pathetic kind of folly. Money, being a means of happiness, should make both parties happy when it changes hands; rightly disposed, it should be twice blessed in its employment; and buyer and seller should alike have their twenty shillings' worth of profit out of every pound. Benjamin Franklin went through life an altered man, because he once paid too dearly for a penny whistle. My concern springs usually from a deeper source, to wit, from having bought a whistle when I did not want one. I find I regret this, or would regret it if I gave myself the time, not only on personal but on moral and philanthropical considerations. For first, in a world where money is wanting to buy books for eager students and food and medicine for pining children, and where a large majority are starved in their most immediate desires, it is surely base, stupid, and cruel to squander money when I am pushed by no appetite and enjoy no return of genuine satisfaction. My philanthropy is wide enough in scope to include myself; and when I have made myself happy, I have at least one good argument that I have acted rightly; but where that is not so, and I have bought and not enjoyed, my mouth is closed, and I conceive that I have robbed the poor. And, second, anything I buy or use which I do not sincerely want or cannot vividly enjoy, disturbs the balance of supply and demand and contributes to remove industrious hands from the production of what is useful or pleasurable and to keep them busy upon ropes of sand and things that are a weariness to the flesh.

That extravagance is truly sinful, and a very silly sin to boot, in which we impoverish mankind and ourselves. It is another question for each man's heart. He knows if he can enjoy what he buys and uses; if he cannot, he is a dog in the manger; nay, if he cannot, I contend he is a thief, for nothing really belongs to a man which he cannot use. Proprietor is connected with propriety; and that only is the man's which is proper to his wants and faculties.

A youth, in choosing a career, must not be alarmed by poverty. Want is a sore thing, but poverty does not imply want. It remains to be seen whether with half his present income, or a third, he cannot, in the most generous sense, live as fully as at present. He is a fool who objects to luxuries; but he is also a fool who does not protest against the waste of luxuries on those who do not desire and cannot enjoy them. It remains to be seen, by each man who would live a true life to himself and not a merely specious life to society, how many luxuries he truly wants and to how many he merely submits as to a social propriety; and all these last he will immediately forswear. Let him do this, and he will be surprised to find how little money it requires to keep him in complete contentment and activity of mind and senses. Life at any level among the easy classes is conceived upon a principle of rivalry, where each man and each household must ape the tastes and emulate the display of others. One is delicate in eating, another in wine, a third in furniture or works of art or dress; and I, who care nothing for any of these refinements, who am perhaps a plain athletic creature and love exercise, beef, beer, flannel shirts, and a camp bed, am yet called upon to assimilate all these other tastes and make these foreign occasions of expenditure my own. It may be cynical: I am sure I shall be told it is selfish; but I will spend my money as I please and for my own intimate personal gratification, and should count myself a nincompoop indeed to lay out the colour of a halfpenny on any fancied social decency or duty. I shall not wear gloves unless my hands are cold, or unless I am born with a delight in them. Dress is my own affair, and that of one other in the world; that, in fact and for an obvious reason, of any woman who shall chance to be in love with me. I shall lodge where I have a mind. If I do not ask society to live with me, they must be silent; and even if I do, they have no further right but to refuse the invitation.

There is a kind of idea abroad that a man must live up to his station, that his house, his table, and his toilette shall be in a ratio of equivalence, and equally imposing to the world. If this is in the Bible, the passage has eluded my inquiries. If it is not in the Bible, it is nowhere but in the heart of the fool. Throw aside this fancy. See what you want, and spend upon that; distinguish what you do not care about, and spend nothing upon that. There are not many people who can differentiate wines above a certain and that not at all a high price. Are you sure you are one of these? Are you sure you prefer cigars at sixpence each to pipes at some fraction of a farthing? Are you sure you wish to keep a gig? Do you care about where you sleep, or are you not as much at your ease in a cheap lodging as in an Elizabethan manor-house? Do you enjoy fine clothes? It is not possible to answer these questions without a trial; and there is nothing more obvious to my mind than that a man who has not experienced some ups and downs, and been forced to live more cheaply than in his father's house, has still his education to begin. Let the experiment be made, and he will find to his surprise that he has been eating beyond his appetite up to that hour; that the cheap lodging, the cheap tobacco, the rough country clothes, the plain table, have not only no power to damp his spirits, but perhaps give him as keen pleasure in the using as the dainties that he took, betwixt sleep and waking, in his former callous and somnambulous submission to wealth.

The true Bohemian, a creature lost to view under the imaginary Bohemians of literature, is exactly described by such a principle of life. The Bohemian of the novel, who drinks more than is good for him and prefers anything to work, and wears strange clothes, is for the most part a respectable Bohemian, respectable in disrespectability, living for the outside, and an adventurer. But the man I mean lives wholly to himself, does what he wishes and not what is thought proper, buys what he wants for himself and not what is thought proper, works at what he believes he can do well and not what will bring him in money or favour. You may be the most respectable of men, and yet a true Bohemian. And the test is this: a Bohemian, for as poor as he may be, is always open-handed to his friends; he knows what he can do with money and how he can do without it, a far rarer and more useful knowledge; he has had less, and continued to live in some contentment; and hence he cares not to keep more, and shares his sovereign or his shilling with a friend. The poor, if they are generous, are Bohemian in virtue of their birth. Do you know where beggars go? Not to the great houses where people sit dazed among their thousands, but to the doors of poor men who have seen the world; and it was the widow who had only two mites, who cast half her fortune into the treasury.

But a young man who elects to save on dress or on lodging, or who in any way falls out of the level of expenditure which is common to his level in society, falls out of society altogether. I suppose the young man to have chosen his career on honourable principles; he finds his talents and instincts can be best contented in a certain pursuit; in a certain industry, he is sure that he is serving mankind with a healthy and becoming service; and he is not sure that he would be doing so, or doing so equally well, in any other industry within his reach. Then that is his true sphere in life; not the one in which he was born to his father, but the one which is proper to his talents and instincts. And suppose he does fall out of society, is that a cause of sorrow? Is your heart so dead that you prefer the recognition of many to the love of a few? Do you think society loves you? Put it to the proof. Decline in material expenditure, and you will find they care no more for you than for the Khan of Tartary. You will lose no friends. If you had any, you will keep them. Only those who were friends to your coat and equipage will disappear; the smiling faces will disappear as by enchantment; but the kind hearts will remain steadfastly kind. Are you so lost, are you so dead, are you so little sure of your own soul and your own footing upon solid fact, that you prefer before goodness and happiness the countenance of sundry diners-out, who will flee from you at a report of ruin, who will drop you with insult at a shadow of disgrace, who do not know you and do not care to know you but by sight, and whom you in your turn neither know nor care to know in a more human manner? Is it not the principle of society, openly avowed, that friendship must not interfere with business; which being paraphrased, means simply that a consideration of money goes before any consideration of affection known to this cold-blooded gang, that they have not even the honour of thieves, and will rook their nearest and dearest as readily as a stranger? I hope I would go as far as most to serve a friend; but I declare openly I would not put on my hat to do a pleasure to society. I may starve my appetites and control my temper for the sake of those I love; but society shall take me as I choose to be, or go without me. Neither they nor I will lose; for where there is no love, it is both laborious and unprofitable to associate.

But it is obvious that if it is only right for a man to spend money on that which he can truly and thoroughly enjoy, the doctrine applies with equal force to the rich and to the poor, to the man who has amassed many thousands as well as to the youth precariously beginning life. And it may be asked, Is not this merely preparing misers, who are not the best of company? But the principle was this: that which a man has not fairly earned, and further, that which he cannot fully enjoy, does not belong to him, but is a part of mankind's treasure which he holds as steward on parole. To mankind, then, it must be made profitable; and how this should be done is, once more, a problem which each man must solve for himself, and about which none has a right to judge him. Yet there are a few considerations which are very obvious and may here be stated. Mankind is not only the whole in general, but every one in particular. Every man or woman is one of mankind's dear possessions; to his or her just brain, and kind heart, and active hands, mankind entrusts some of its hopes for the future; he or she is a possible well-spring of good acts and source of blessings to the race. This money which you do not need, which, in a rigid sense, you do not want, may therefore be returned not only in public benefactions to the race, but in private kindnesses. Your wife, your children, your friends stand nearest to you, and should be helped the first. There at least there can be little imposture, for you know their necessities of your own knowledge. And consider, if all the world did as you did, and according to their means extended help in the circle of their affections, there would be no more crying want in times of plenty and no more cold, mechanical charity given with a doubt and received with confusion. Would not this simple rule make a new world out of the old and cruel one which we inhabit? Have you more money after this is done? are you so wealthy in gold, so poor in friends who need your help, that having done all you can among your own circle, you have still much of mankind's treasure undisposed upon your hands? There are still other matters to be done where you need not fear imposition; and what is over you may hand over without fear to the children whom you have taught; they may be unfaithful to the trust, but you will have done your best and told them on what a solemn responsibility they must accept and deal with this money. . . . .

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ON MORALITY

I

THE word morality is so old and so important that we begin to pay it an idolatrous adoration. We are like infants that have planted money ; it has been buried so long ; there must certainly be some increase ; the word is so old and venerable, it must surely have acquired a more august significance. In both we are right ; if the coins lie buried long enough, they are become antiquities to be treasured in museums ; if the word has been long enough familiar in men's minds, it has acquired the more authority upon their action. In both we are wrong ; the sixpence is still only a sixpence ; it is not a shilling ; though it may now be sold for half-a-crown ; and the word even to this day, even when it rules us with the prestige of inherited familiarity, has yet gained no more divine sanction, but still rehearses the humble story of its birth. Morality—from *mos*, that which is customary, that which is accepted, " good form," the " correct thing " in our particular day or nation—it must still seem strange, that so poor a name should have been chosen for our whole science of right and wrong, of all that is most passionate, most sad, and most noble in the tragedy of man : a plain word of what we call truth is always so untrue to subjective emotions, seems always indeed so calumnious of life. And yet still, after all these centuries, there is no more in the word than we put in it. And in one sense there is less. Follow the opinions of a single and a very narrow race from the day of Jacob's remarkable enterprise on Shechem, to the day when Gamaliel stood up and said. . . .

We see there through what an orbit morality runs, and the two attitudes of man to his *mores :* his savage trust in them, his civilised dubiety :—in the morning of a nation's life, unflinching loyalty to its own customs ; in the evening, curiosity as to those of others, which "may be of God" also. So that here we find the word has actually declined in force ; but at the same time we find another idea springing up concurrently.

The love of approval, the need of human countenance, the ape-like trick of imitating that which we admire, the childish propensity to repeat the same act or the same form of words once used, among low races continually breed fresh customs. They grow up, without much or any thought of use ; accident and æsthetic taste led to their acceptance, the ape-like part of man to their perpetuation : and the individual savage was born to the whole mass, and followed the manners of his tribe for the same reason that he spoke its dialect. They were his by birth, and he inquired no further. To men of other parentage, inheriting other customs, he could be justly tolerant, at least, if they were neighbours. Thus the half-breed Indian, if he were a high-minded man, although preferring the habits of his mother tribe, held himself bound to be a Christian. It was his duty (quite apart from intellectual assent) to offer a brave type of the paternal race, and not to tamper with but shiningly to fulfil its least tradition.

Such being the growth of morals, such their original sanction, it might even seem strange that any should have proved of use. But it is to be observed that even in those days there were leaders of men ; the great lawgiver, mythical hero, had, doubtless, many avatars ; and the Survival of the Fittest was at work. Such being their growth and sanction, it is very plain that at least, of all this mountain-heap of customs, many must be useless and some harmful. And here we see the task of a progressive civilisation. The civilised man, though he has still much of the habitual loyalty, struggles beyond. International religions—Christianity, Islam, and the like—and still more the mighty intellectual labours and monumental example of the Roman Empire, have widened his moral prospect. He conceives himself no longer as the child of a sect nor yet wholly as the subject of a nation, but in a great and growing measure as a member of the general race. With an enfranchised criticism,—in these days at least tending to be hostile—he considers his inheritance of morals; has already discarded many that appeared harmful, or only inert and cumbersome; and would probably (if he knew how) eliminate all but what are needful to preserve the peace. Superstition has changed place; he no longer believes in the sanctity of any particular custom, but he has made a new idol in the place of that. He conceives of morals as being only partly customary, and that part the worse. He deludes himself with a fairy tale that when the body of law and custom shall be dead, the soul of morality will be disengaged and made perfect; that a man may plough up his orchard, and come round again next week and enjoy the shade and gather apples.

II

This singular notion, it is well to brush away. There is no eternal *Thou Shalt Not* inscribed upon man's nature; only rumours in the market-place varying from age to age, praising to-morrow what they yesterday condemned. There is no Arabian tale so fantastic as the history of right and wrong and perhaps no action conceivable that has not (at one time or other) figured under both categories. If there be anything we can condemn (to-day and in our race) without afterthought or hesitation, it is the wanton infliction of suffering. Yet it was no degraded race that recognised elaborate cruelty for a duty. And once so recognised, it became one. The Mohawk, when he tortured his prisoners, or was tortured himself, through days of agony not to be narrated, was no less consciously (and no less surely) in the Kingdom of Heaven, than you when you rattle pence into the missionary box. That was right for him; to this business, he brought, with a whole heart, his moral forces: the noblest part of him found exercise among horrors that we sicken to remember. The Jesuit missionary, coming to a new field of labour, rejoiced to find already planted in men's hearts the root and rudiment of all religion: the doctrine of a future life of bliss for those who have done well. Yet a little, and he was proportionately cast down by a new discovery: that what his penitents meant by doing well was to kill their enemies—and eat them. And the same organ, the same bundle of inherited propensities, the same human conscience, supported the Father in his laborious and peaceful exile, and applauded the Carib at his inhuman banquet. To multiply instances were only to waste space; historic inquiry, international comparison, will furnish them alike, and by the shipload to the dullest. The notions of right and wrong, in so far as they attach to specific acts, are the creatures of mere fashion, like our boots and bonnets. Such a fashion once set, the soul of contemporary man clings about it and will die for it; once overthrown, and the souls of his descendants are astonished to read of his delusion.

III

Yet the notion is general and not confined to Jacobins, that all *mores* may be overthrown, and morality survive; that the soul of the matter will not merely be unharmed but really embellished by the brutal murder of the body. And the elegant superstition stands (like all the rest) on some foundation. The most amazing fact in man—his indestructible willingness to do what he thinks right instead of what he thinks agreeable—alike precedes and outlasts the creeds in which it looks for sanction.

It is not wonderful if he thinks highly of this moral instinct, and, in one sense, too highly. For as a guide, it is stone blind, and as a teacher, it is dumb. Incurable courtier of the day, it curtseys to all fashions; dull soldier of fortune, it will still serve under the nearest captain. Yet here we seem to go too far; for the conscience often revolts from the contemporary doctrine, and the reformer and the martyr (of whom we are going to have plenty to say further on) make a noble mark on the pages of man's history. It is true our inheritance is twofold, tribal or national on the one hand, individual on the other. The race or nation inherits from millions of ascendents a body of rigid laws and a general and fluid sense of what is fitting. The individual man inherits no law, but a special sense of what is fitting. The law is always lagging in the rear; the individual and the general sense are always at some odds. It is a three-cornered duel; a triangular conflict of authorities in which man's soul, being in the midst, receives the mauling. Leave law aside, for that is a question by itself; and which of the other two, supposing them to differ, shall a man obey? On the one side, the manners, eminently respectable of his race and period; on the other, the instinct τὸ καλόν of himself. On the one his inherited voice; on the other, his inherited and instilled gregariousness and love of approbation. To the thoughtful man, his special sense will appear to speak with more authority; it takes him on his bed at night and poisons solitude when his life truly passes. With the man of words, the good sleeper, the good fellow, the grasper of hands, the general sense will usually triumph; for such an one lives in the light of the camp-fire and by the countenance of admiring comrades. And in either case, the conscience having come through tribulation, will clap its wings and crow for victory: equally pleased, being indeed a buzzard of an attribute.

"What is truth?" It was Pilate's momentous question: the conservative's eternal question to the reformer. What is truth? And what is your truth, the little cranny, the little flaw in the coincidence between your personal, and the tribal, sense of right? Is it worth dying for? Is it worth proclaiming? Are you sure it will repay mankind for the bursting of ties, the disconsecration of catchwords, the enfranchisement of appetites? Lord Bacon, whom asses suppose to be the author of the plays of Shakespeare, had so little weighed the bearing of the question, had so imperfectly conceived the drama of the scene, that he must write of "jesting Pilate." It was tragic jesting; Pilate was straining every nerve to save his prisoner; pleading with him like the sceptical eclectic that the Roman was, and pleading in vain as he must always do with perfect faith. The martyr and the reformer, types of the individual conscience in revolt from the collective, answer quite unshaken by the question. They think it worth while to die for an egg on the antipodes; and for that we honour them without reserve. They think it worth while to crack the mortar of society and loose the bonds of habitual assent; and here we sometimes wonder. What a man does with his life is largely his own affair; and we know the best he can do with it is to lay it down. What he does to that weak fabric of manners in which we live is a more serious matter. Ancient consent, inherited propensities, the fear of disaffected countenances on the street, these are fragile business. So long as we suppose manners to be the shadow of an eternal something else, they are no more sacred than the morning papers. So soon as we understand them for the ground and bond of man's association, the terms of his surrender to society, the best that he has yet agreed to recognise, the spoken word (not always pertinent) in which his aspirations after righteousness take voice—even the reformer will begin to hesitate. "All things are lawful to me," said Paul waxing exceeding bold, but even that revolutionary thinker allowed that all were not expedient. Man stands between his two guides the authoritative choice in his own bosom, the external consent or compromise of his age and nation, both inherited, both stark irrational, both (if we reflect upon it) sacred. If he cross his conscience, certain intimate dishonour, possible personal degradation: if he defy the sense of his contemporaries, certain outward disrepute and possible public hurt. And if the public hurt is to be considered the more tenderly, yet we must not minimise the disrepute. It is good to bear unpopularity; but the sense that suffers is the probable root of all our virtues.

And the man who has no sensitive need of public countenance, the man who offends his neighbours without pain, is of the blood of criminals. And there is nothing (it is worth while to observe) on which the New Testament blows so directly hot and cold as on this difficulty. Christ with his sweeping " Let the dead bury their dead," Paul with his timid concern for the weak brother.

THE ETHICS OF CRIME

THERE is no subject on which public opinion seems more lax and self-destructive. Crime is originally a legal term; already in Latin it has lost its legal strictness, but the base of the idea remained as it still remains to-day in English. To-day what we have to complain of is a certain vagueness, the direct legacy of the eighteenth century and its *reductio ad absurdum*, the French Revolution. The word has been Jacobinised; the idea had also been in this way: A crime properly is any act which shocks the popular conscience. It is not simply an infringement of the law, many of whose provisions are explicitly municipal, lack an emotional sanction, and may be broken without offending public sentiment, as to-day by the poacher and yesterday by the smuggler. Crime (to reach the full meaning of the word) should at once break the letter of the law and offend against the sanctities of life; as matricide, or rape; acts which the law forbids and by which the public conscience is revolted. There are days when it will seem a virtue to be finding at least these. The corrupt management of a bank is committing a worse act to the enlightened mind than any single murder. All sinful acts run to murder. Murder is a distinction without a difference. Two strands are in the word as we use it to-day: a legal or emotional, and it is from this circumstance that sometimes the emotional element is present, and not the legal. A sin is not a crime, because the law regards it not: and the mass of men (all indeed but the puritans) have retained wit enough to perceive that the law should not regard it. Yet the sin may awaken as much public horror as the crime. To many of us the desertion of the Soudan appeared an act of monstrous iniquity ; it shocked us ; above all, when the people of that country came to be personified for English immigrants in the beloved figure of Gordon, it spoke more to our hearts and consciences than any dozens of murders. But it was not a crime, for it broke no positive enactment. This is a case from yesterday ; to-day there are some others who are shocked by Mr. Balfour's rule in Ireland ; it stirs them to the very seat of generous indignation. But Mr. Balfour is administering, not breaking, the law ; and his worst acts (supposing any of them to be bad) are not crimes.

And, sometimes again, the legal element is present and not the emotional. Suppose that during those long months while Gordon waited in Soudan, a thought had occurred to some zealot in that part of the nation, which felt as I confess I did, that there was an offence against loyalty. Suppose that it had occurred to him, that on the death of some conspicuous minister, the ministry would be apt to fall, and that which succeeded it was certain to move with greater vigour in the business of the rescue ; and suppose him led on (as men so easily are) by this course of reasoning ; suppose him to play the part of the free justice ; and suppose (true to his premises) the ministry had fallen and Gordon and the immigrants were saved. The zealot act had thus (on our hypothesis) the happiest consequence ; a life fallen, but how many had been spared ! the sanctity of human life had been broken, but the sanctity of human pledge corroborated by a declaratory act. Many people in England had thrown up their caps at such a consummation ; and for the fortunate deed had lacked the emotional element of a crime. For all that, the law would have been broken, and it would have been a sad day for England, if judge, jury, and hangman had not done their part. Equally to-day, there is no lack of Irish patriots (unless fame belies them) who think of Mr. Balfour as an imaginary personage was supposed to think of Gladstone ; indeed, fame belies them, if they do not pass from thought to action ; and if their hopes for Ireland be justified, the death of the Irish secretary would be a gain to that section of the human race. Let us suppose him killed, and let us suppose as we did in the other case, that all the hopes of the assassin are instantly realised, and Ireland becomes at once happy, virtuous, and free. For the Irish and the party, this deed will lack the emotional element of a crime ; it will seem instead a providential disposition. But as the law will have been broken ; and if the judge, the jury, and the hangman fail of their offices, it will be an ill day for Ireland, and England, and the world.

The emotional element is the personal ; the legal is the national. The first represents my feeling ; the second is the best means I can collect as to the feeling of mankind at large. If there be a majority against a law, it can be instantly repealed. Until it is repealed, I am bound to regard it as the voice of my fellow-citizens. Am I bound to prefer it ? Here law and religion, the sanctity of the human conscience and the sanctity of human ties, come into direct collision. I believe it to be right ; the law, the mouthpiece of generations of mankind, declares it to be wrong. It is an act of some presumption to back my own opinion against that of so many, but presumption is not uncommon nor always wrong. *Ipsi dixi ;* but perhaps after all it is I who am in the right. It may be proper to commit murder ; it may be proper (for aught I can see) to commit rape, circumstances vary so infinitely, consciences read them in such varying lights. And we have all (except the puritans and, to some extent, the Jacobins) agreed that a man's conscience is autonomous ; we have but reserved the right to interfere and (what we somewhat uprighteously call) to punish him ; we tell him, little Mr. Chucks, in the most gentlemanly manner in the world : " My dear little fellow, you have done one person quite right ; and your conscience is, no doubt, an admirable conscience ; but as its dictates render you a public nuisance in our community, one must seclude or make an end of you." The man, in short, is quite right emotionally, to have murdered Mr. Balfour ; and we are legally quite right to hang him.

PULVIS ET UMBRA

WE look for some reward of our endeavours and are disappointed; not success, not happiness, not even peace of conscience, crowns our ineffectual efforts to do well. Our frailties are invincible, our virtues barren; the battle goes sore against us to the going down of the sun. The canting moralist tells us of right and wrong; and we look abroad, even on the face of our small earth, and find them change with every climate, and no country where some action is not honoured for a virtue and none where it is not branded for a vice; and we look in our experience, and find no vital congruity in the wisest rules, but at the best a municipal fitness. It is not strange if we are tempted to despair of good. We ask too much. Our religions and moralities have been trimmed to flatter us, till they are all emasculate and sentimentalised, and only please and weaken. Truth is of a rougher strain. In the harsh face of life, faith can read a bracing gospel. The human race is a thing more ancient than the ten commandments; and the bones and revolutions of the Kosmos, in whose joints we are but moss and fungus, more ancient still.

I

Of the Kosmos in the last resort, science reports many doubtful things and all of them appalling. There seems no substance to this solid globe on which we stamp: nothing but symbols and ratios. Symbols and ratios carry us and bring us forth and beat us down; gravity that swings the incommensurable suns and worlds through space, is but a figment varying inversely as the squares of distances; and the suns and worlds themselves, imponderable figures of abstraction, NH_3 and H_2O. Consideration dares not dwell upon this view; that way madness lies; science carries us into zones of speculation, where there is no habitable city for the mind of man.

But take the Kosmos with a grosser faith, as our senses give it us. We behold space sown with rotatory islands, suns and worlds and the shards and wrecks of systems: some, like the sun, still blazing; some rotting, like the earth; others, like the moon, stable in desolation. All of these we take to be made of something we call matter: a thing which no analysis can help us to conceive; to whose incredible properties no familiarity can reconcile our minds. This stuff, when not purified by the lustration of fire, rots uncleanly into something we call life; seized through all its atoms with a pediculous malady; swelling in tumours that become independent, sometimes even (by an abhorrent prodigy) locomotory; one splitting into millions, millions cohering into one, as the malady proceeds through varying stages. This vital putrescence of the dust, used as we are to it, yet strikes us with occasional disgust, and the profusion of worms in a piece of ancient turf, or the air of a marsh darkened with insects, will sometimes check our breathing so that we aspire for cleaner places. But none is clean: the moving sand is infected with lice; the pure spring, where it bursts out of the mountain, is a mere issue of worms; even in the hard rock the crystal is forming.

In two main shapes this eruption covers the countenance of the earth: the animal and the vegetable: one in some degree the inversion of the other: the second rooted to the spot; the first coming detached out of its natal mud, and scurrying abroad with the myriad feet of insects or towering into the heavens on the wings of birds: a thing so inconceivable that, if it be well considered, the heart stops. To what passes with the anchored vermin, we have little clue: doubtless they have their joys and sorrows, their delights and killing agonies: it appears not how. But of the locomotory, to which we ourselves belong, we can tell more. These share with us a thousand miracles: the miracles of sight, of hearing, of the projection of sound, things that bridge space; the miracles of memory and reason, by which the present is conceived, and when it is gone, its image kept living in the brains of man and brute; the miracle of reproduction, with its imperious desires and staggering consequences. And to put the last touch upon this mountain mass of the revolting and the inconceivable, all these prey upon each other, lives tearing other lives in pieces, cramming them inside themselves, and by that summary process, growing fat: the vegetarian, the whale, perhaps the tree, not less than the lion of the desert; for the vegetarian is only the eater of the dumb.

Meanwhile our rotatory island loaded with predatory life, and more drenched with blood, both animal and vegetable, than ever mutinied ship, scuds through space with unimaginable speed, and turns alternate cheeks to the reverberation of a blazing world, ninety million miles away.

II

What a monstrous spectre is this man, the disease of the agglutinated dust, lifting alternate feet or lying drugged with slumber; killing, feeding, growing, bringing forth small copies of himself; grown upon with hair like grass, fitted with eyes that move and glitter in his face; a thing to set children screaming;—and yet looked at nearlier, known as his fellows know him, how surprising are his attributes! Poor soul, here for so little, cast among so many hardships, filled with desires so incommensurate and so inconsistent, savagely surrounded, savagely descended, irremediably condemned to prey upon his fellow lives: who should have blamed him had he been of a piece with his destiny and a being merely barbarous? And we look and behold him instead filled with imperfect virtues: infinitely childish, often admirably valiant, often touchingly kind; sitting down, amidst his momentary life, to debate of right and wrong and the attributes of the deity; rising up to do battle for an egg or die for an idea; singling out his friends and his mate with cordial affection; bringing forth in pain, rearing with long-suffering solicitude, his young. To touch the heart of his mystery, we find in him one thought, strange to the point of lunacy: the thought of duty; the thought of something owing to himself, to his neighbour, to his God: an ideal of decency, to which he would rise if it were possible; a limit of shame, below which, if it be possible, he will not stoop. The design in most men is one of conformity; here and there, in picked natures, it transcends itself and soars on the other side, arming martyrs with independence; but in all, in their degrees, it is a bosom thought:—Not in man alone, for we trace it in dogs and cats whom we know fairly well, and doubtless some similar point of honour sways the elephant, the oyster, and the louse, of whom we know so little:—But in man, at least, it sways with so complete an empire that merely selfish things come second, even with the selfish: that appetites are starved, fears are conquered, pains supported; that almost the dullest shrinks from the reproof of a glance, although it were a child's; and all but the most cowardly stand amid the risks of war; and the more noble, having strongly conceived an act as due to their ideal, affront and embrace death. Strange enough if, with their singular origin and perverted practice, they think they are to be rewarded in some future life: stranger still, if they are persuaded of the contrary, and think this blow, which they solicit, will strike them senseless for eternity. I shall be reminded what a tragedy of misconception and misconduct man at large presents: of organised injustice, cowardly violence, and treacherous crime; and of the damning imperfections of the best. They cannot be too darkly drawn. Man is indeed marked for failure in his efforts to do right. But where the best consistently miscarry, how tenfold more remarkable that all should continue to strive; and surely we should find it both touching and inspiriting, that in a field from which success is banished, our race should not cease to labour.

If the first view of this creature, stalking in his rotatory isle, be a thing to shake the courage of the stoutest, on this nearer sight, he startles us with an admiring wonder. It matters not where we look, under what climate we observe him, in what stage of society, in what depth of ignorance, burthened with what erroneous morality ; by campfires in Assiniboia, the snow powdering his shoulders, the wind plucking his blanket, as he sits, passing the ceremonial calumet and uttering his grave opinions like a Roman senator ; in ships at sea, a man inured to hardship and vile pleasures, his brightest hope a fiddle in a tavern and a bedizened trull who sells herself to rob him, and he for all that simple, innocent, cheerful, kindly like a child, constant to toil, brave to drown, for others ; in the slums of cities, moving among indifferent millions to mechanical employments, without hope of change in the future, with scarce a pleasure in the present, and yet true to his virtues, honest up to his lights, kind to his neighbours, tempted perhaps in vain by the bright gin-palace, perhaps long-suffering with the drunken wife that ruins him ; in India (a woman this time) kneeling with broken cries and streaming tears, as she drowns her child in the sacred river ; in the brothel, the discard of society, living mainly on strong drink fed with affronts, a fool, a thief, the comrade of thieves, and even here keeping the point of honour and the touch of pity, often repaying the world's scorn with service, often standing firm upon a scruple, and at a certain cost, rejecting riches :—everywhere some virtue cherished or affected, everywhere some decency of thought and carriage, everywhere the ensign of man's ineffectual goodness :—ah ! if I could show you this ! if I could show you these men and women, all the world over, in every stage of history, under every abuse of error, under every circumstance of failure, without hope, without help, without thanks, still obscurely fighting the lost fight of virtue, still clinging, in the brothel or on the scaffold, to some rag of honour, the poor jewel of their souls ! They may seek to escape, and yet they cannot ; it is not alone their privilege and glory, but their doom ; they are condemned to some nobility ; all their lives long, the desire of good is at their heels, the implacable hunter.

Of all earth's meteors, here at least is the most strange and consoling : that this ennobled lemur, this hair-crowned bubble of the dust, this inheritor of a few years and sorrows, should yet deny himself his rare delights, and add to his frequent pains, and live for an ideal, however misconceived. Nor can we stop with man. A new doctrine, received with screams a little while ago by canting moralists, and still not properly worked into the body of our thoughts, lights us a step farther into the heart of this rough but noble universe. For nowadays the pride of man denies in vain his kinship with the original dust. He stands no longer like a thing apart. Close at his heels we see the dog, prince of another genus : and in him too, we see dumbly testified the same cultus of an unattainable ideal, the same constancy in failure. Does it stop with the dog ? We look at our feet where the ground is blackened with the swarming ant : a creature so small, so far from us in the hierarchy of brutes, that we can scarce trace and scarce comprehend his doings ; and here also, in his ordered polities and rigorous justice, we see confessed the law of duty and the fact of individual sin. Does it stop, then, with the ant ? Rather this desire of well-doing and this doom of frailty run through all the grades of life : rather is this earth, from the frosty top of Everest to the next margin of the internal fire, one stage of ineffectual virtues and one temple of pious tears and perseverance. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together. It is the common and the godlike law of life. The browsers, the biters, the barkers, the hairy coats of field and forest, the squirrel in the oak, the thousand-footed creeper in the dust, as they share with us the gift of life, share with us the love of an ideal : strive like us—like us are tempted to grow weary of the struggle—to do well ; like us receive at times unmerited refreshment, visitings of support, returns of courage ; and are condemned like us to be crucified between that double law of the members and the will. Are they like us, I wonder, in the timid hope of some reward, some sugar with the drug? do they, too, stand aghast at unrewarded virtues, at the sufferings of those whom, in our partiality, we take to be just, and the prosperity of such as, in our blindness, we call wicked? It may be, and yet God knows what they should look for. Even while they look, even while they repent, the foot of man treads them by thousands in the dust, the yelping hounds burst upon their trail, the bullet speeds, the knives are heating in the den of the vivisectionist; or the dew falls, and the generation of a day is blotted out. For these are creatures, compared with whom our weakness is strength, our ignorance wisdom, our brief span eternity.

And as we dwell, we living things, in our isle of terror and under the imminent hand of death, God forbid it should be man the erected, the reasoner, the wise in his own eyes—God forbid it should be man that wearies in well-doing, that despairs of unrewarded effort, or utters the language of complaint. Let it be enough for faith, that the whole creation groans in mortal frailty, strives with unconquerable constancy: surely not all in vain. ✓

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Re-wait

A CHRISTMAS SERMON

BY the time this paper appears, I shall have been talking for twelve months; and it is thought I should take my leave in a formal and seasonable manner. Valedictory eloquence is rare, and death-bed sayings have not often hit the mark of the occasion. Charles Second, wit and sceptic, a man whose life had been one long lesson in human incredulity, an easy-going comrade, a manœuvring king—remembered and embodied all his wit and scepticism along with more than his usual good-humour in the famous " I am afraid, gentlemen, I am an unconscionable time a-dying."

I

An unconscionable time a-dying—there is the picture (" I am afraid, gentlemen,") of your life and of mine. The sands run out, and the hours are " numbered and imputed," and the days go by; and when the last of these finds us, we have been a long time dying, and what else? The very length is something, if we reach that hour of separation undishonoured; and to have lived at all is doubtless (in the soldierly expression) to have served. There is a tale in Tacitus of how the veterans mutinied in the German wilderness; of how they mobbed Germanicus, clamouring to go home; and of how, seizing their general's hand, these old war-worn exiles passed his finger along their toothless gums. *Sunt lacrymæ rerum*: this was the most eloquent of the songs of Simeon. And when a man has lived to a fair age, he bears his marks of service. He may have never been remarked upon the breach at the head of the army; at least he shall have lost his teeth on the camp bread.

The idealism of serious people in this age of ours is of a noble character. It never seems to them that they have served enough; they have a fine impatience of their virtues. It were perhaps more modest to be singly thankful that we are no worse. It is not only our enemies, those desperate characters—it is we ourselves who know not what we do;—thence springs the glimmering hope that perhaps we do better than we think: that to scramble through this random business with hands reasonably clean, to have played the part of a man or woman with some reasonable fulness, to have often resisted the diabolic, and at the end to be still resisting it, is for the poor human soldier to have done right well. To ask to see some fruit of our endeavour is but a transcendental way of serving for reward; and what we take to be contempt of self is only greed of hire.

And again if we require so much of ourselves, shall we not require much of others? If we do not genially judge our own deficiencies, is it not to be feared we shall be even stern to the trespasses of others? And he who (looking back upon his own life) can see no more than that he has been unconscionably long a-dying, will he not be tempted to think his neighbour unconscionably long of getting hanged? It is probable that nearly all who think of conduct at all, think of it too much; it is certain we all think too much of sin. We are not damned for doing wrong, but for not doing right; Christ would never hear of negative morality; *thou shalt* was ever his word, with which he superseded *thou shalt not*. To make our idea of morality centre on forbidden acts is to defile the imagination and to introduce into our judgments of our fellow-men a secret element of gusto. If a thing is wrong for us, we should not dwell upon the thought of it; or we shall soon dwell upon it with inverted pleasure. If we cannot drive it from our minds—one thing of two: either our creed is in the wrong and we must more indulgently remodel it; or else, if our morality be in the right, we are criminal lunatics and should place our persons in restraint. A mark of such unwholesomely divided minds is the passion for interference with others: the Fox without the Tail was of this breed, but had (if his biographer is to be trusted) a certain antique civility now out of date. A man may have a flaw, a weakness, that unfits him for the duties of life, that spoils his temper, that threatens his integrity, or that betrays him into cruelty. It has to be conquered; but it must never be suffered to engross his thoughts. The true duties lie all upon the farther side, and must be attended to with a whole mind so soon as this preliminary clearing of the decks has been effected. In order that he may be kind and honest, it may be needful he should become a total abstainer; let him become so then, and the next day let him forget the circumstance. Trying to be kind and honest will require all his thoughts; a mortified appetite is never a wise companion; in so far as he has had to mortify an appetite, he will still be the worse man; and of such an one a great deal of cheerfulness will be required in judging life, and a great deal of humility in judging others.

It may be argued again that dissatisfaction with our life's endeavour springs in some degree from dulness. We require higher tasks, because we do not recognise the height of those we have. Trying to be kind and honest seems an affair too simple and too inconsequential for gentlemen of our heroic mould; we had rather set ourselves to something bold, arduous, and conclusive; we had rather found a schism or suppress a heresy, cut off a hand or mortify an appetite. But the task before us, which is to co-endure with our existence, is rather one of microscopic fineness, and the heroism required is that of patience. There is no cutting of the Gordian knots of life; each must be smilingly unravelled.

To be honest, to be kind—to earn a little and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered, to keep a few friends but these without capitulation—above all, on the same grim condition, to keep friends with himself—here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy. He has an ambitious soul who would ask more; he has a hopeful spirit who should look in such an enterprise to be successful. There is indeed one element in human destiny that not blindness itself can controvert: whatever else we are intended to do, we are not intended to succeed; failure is the fate allotted. It is so in every art and study; it is so above all in the continent art of living well. Here is a pleasant thought for the year's end or for the end of life: Only self-deception will be satisfied, and there need be no despair for the despairer.

II

But Christmas is not only the mile-mark of another year, moving us to thoughts of self-examination: it is a season, from all its associations, whether domestic or religious, suggesting thoughts of joy. A man dissatisfied with his endeavours is a man tempted to sadness. And in the midst of the winter, when his life runs lowest and he is reminded of the empty chairs of his beloved, it is well he should be condemned to this fashion of the smiling face. Noble disappointment, noble self-denial are not to be admired, not even to be pardoned, if they bring bitterness. It is one thing to enter the kingdom of heaven maim; another to maim yourself and stay without. And the kingdom of heaven is of the childlike, of those who are easy to please, who love and who give pleasure. Mighty men of their hands, the smiters and the builders and the judges, have lived long and done sternly and yet preserved this lovely character; and among our carpet interests and twopenny concerns, the shame were indelible if *we* should lose it. Gentleness and cheerfulness, these come before all morality; they are the perfect duties. And it is the trouble with moral men that they have neither one nor other. It was the moral man, the Pharisee, whom Christ could not away with. If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it they are wrong. I do not say "give them up," for they may be all you have; but conceal them like a vice, lest they should spoil the lives of better and simpler people.

A strange temptation attends upon man: to keep his eye on pleasures, even when he will not share in them; to aim all his morals against them. This very year a lady (singular iconoclast!) proclaimed a crusade against dolls; and the racy sermon against lust is a feature of the age. I venture to call such moralists insincere. At any excess or perversion of a natural appetite, their lyre sounds of itself with relishing denunciations; but for all displays of the truly diabolic—envy, malice, the mean lie, the mean silence, the calumnious truth, the backbiter, the petty tyrant, the peevish poisoner of family life—their standard is quite different. These are wrong, they will admit, yet somehow not so wrong; there is no zeal in their assault on them, no secret element of gusto warms up the sermon; it is for things not wrong in themselves that they reserve the choicest of their indignation. A man may naturally disclaim all moral kinship with the Reverend Mr. Zola or the hobgoblin old lady of the dolls; for these are gross and naked instances. And yet in each of us some similar element resides. The sight of a pleasure in which we cannot or else will not share moves us to a particular impatience. It may be because we are envious, or because we are sad, or because we dislike noise and romping—being so refined, or because—being so philosophic—we have an overweighing sense of life's gravity: at least, as we go on in years, we are all tempted to frown upon our neighbour's pleasures. People are nowadays so fond of resisting temptations; here is one to be resisted. They are fond of self-denial; here is a propensity that cannot be too peremptorily denied. There is an idea abroad among moral people that they should make their neighbours good. One person I have to make good: myself. But my duty to my neighbour is much more nearly expressed by saying that I have to make him happy —if I may.

III

Happiness and goodness, according to canting moralists, stand in the relation of effect and cause. There was never anything less proved or less probable: our happiness is never in our own hands; we inherit our constitution; we stand buffet among friends and enemies; we may be so built as to feel a sneer or an aspersion with unusual keenness, and so circumstanced as to be unusually exposed to them; we may have nerves very sensitive to pain, and be afflicted with a disease very painful. Virtue will not help us, and it is not meant to help us. It is not even its own reward, except for the self-centred and—I had almost said—the unamiable. No man can pacify his conscience; if quiet be what he want, he shall do better to let that organ perish from disuse. And to avoid the penalties of the law, and the minor *capitis diminutio* of social ostracism, is an affair of wisdom—of cunning, if you will—and not of virtue.

In his own life, then, a man is not to expect happiness, only to profit by it gladly when it shall arise; he is on duty here; he knows not how or why, and does not need to know; he knows not for what hire, and must not ask. Somehow or other, though he does not know what goodness is, he must try to be good; somehow or other, though he cannot tell what will do it, he must try to give happiness to others. And no doubt there comes in here a frequent clash of duties. How far is he to make his neighbour happy? How far must he respect that smiling face, so easy to cloud, so hard to brighten again? And how far, on the other side, is he bound to be his brother's keeper and the prophet of his own morality? How far must he resent evil?

The difficulty is that we have little guidance; Christ's sayings on the point being hard to reconcile with each other, and (the most of them) hard to accept. But the truth of his teaching would seem to be this: in our own person and fortune, we should be ready to accept and to pardon all; it is *our* cheek we are to turn, *our* coat that we are to give away to the man who has taken *our* cloak. But when another's face is buffeted, perhaps a little of the lion will become us best. That we are to suffer others to be injured, and stand by, is not conceivable and surely not desirable. Revenge, says Bacon, is a kind of wild justice; its judgments at least are delivered by an insane judge; and in our own quarrel we can see nothing truly and do nothing wisely. But in the quarrel of our neighbour, let us be more bold. One person's happiness is as sacred as another's; when we cannot defend both, let us defend one with a stout heart. It is only in so far as we are doing this, that we have any right to interfere: the defence of B is our only ground of action against A. A has as good a right to go to the devil, as we to go to glory; and neither knows what he does.

The truth is that all these interventions and denunciations and militant mongerings of moral half-truths, though they be sometimes needful, though they are often enjoyable, do yet belong to an inferior grade of duties. Ill-temper and envy and revenge find here an arsenal of pious disguises; this is the playground of inverted lusts. With a little more patience and a little less temper, a gentler and wiser method might be found in almost every case: and the knot that we cut by some fine heady quarrel-scene in private life, or, in public affairs, by some denunciatory act against what we are pleased to call our neighbour's vices, might yet have been unwoven by the hand of sympathy.

IV

To look back upon the past year, and see how little we have striven and to what small purpose; and how often we have been cowardly and hung back, or temerarious and rushed unwisely in; and how every day and all day long we have transgressed the law of kindness;—it may seem a paradox, but in the bitterness of these discoveries, a certain consolation resides. Life is not designed to minister to a man's vanity. He goes upon his long business most of the time with a hanging head, and all the time like a blind child. Full of rewards and pleasures as it is—so that to see the day break or the moon rise, or to meet a friend, or to hear the dinner-call when he is hungry, fills him with surprising joys—this world is yet for him no abiding city. Friendships fall through, health fails, weariness assails him; year after year, he must thumb the hardly varying record of his own weakness and folly. It is a friendly process of detachment. When the time comes that he should go, there need be few illusions left about himself. *Here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much*:—surely that may be his epitaph, of which he need not be ashamed. Nor will he complain at the summons which calls a defeated soldier from the field: defeated, ay, if he were Paul or Marcus Aurelius!—but if there is still one inch of fight in his old spirit, undishonoured. The faith which sustained him in his life-long blindness and life-long disappointment will scarce even be required in this last formality of laying down his arms. Give him a march with his old bones; there, out of the glorious sun-coloured earth, out of the day and the dust and the ecstasy—there goes another Faithful Failure!

From a recent book of verse, where there is more than one such beautiful and manly poem, I take this memorial piece: it says better than I can, what I love to think; let it be our parting word:—

"A late lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, grey city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

"The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,

Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night, with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

"So be my passing !
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death." *

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* From *A Book of Verses*, by William Ernest Henley. D. Nutt, 1888.

31-1

REFLECTIONS AND REMARKS ON HUMAN LIFE

I. JUSTICE AND JUSTIFICATION.—(1) It is the business of this life to make excuses for others, but none for ourselves. We should be clearly persuaded of our own misconduct, for that is the part of knowledge in which we are most apt to be defective. (2) Even justice is no right of a man's own, but a thing, like the king's tribute, which shall never be his, but which he should strive to see rendered to another. None was ever just to me; none ever will be. You may reasonably aspire to be chief minister or sovereign pontiff; but not to be justly regarded in your own character and acts. You know too much to be satisfied. For justice is but an earthly currency, paid to appearances; you may see another superficially righted; but be sure he has got too little or too much; and in your own case rest content with what is paid you. It is more just than you suppose; that your virtues are misunderstood is a price you pay to keep your meannesses concealed. (3) When you seek to justify yourself to others, you may be sure you will plead falsely. If you fail, you have the shame of the failure; if you succeed, you will have made too much of it, and be unjustly esteemed upon the other side. (4) You have perhaps only one friend in the world, in whose esteem it is worth while for you to right yourself. Justification to indifferent persons is, at best, an impertinent intrusion. Let them think what they please; they will be the more likely to forgive you in the end. (5) It is a question hard to be resolved, whether you should at any time criminate another to defend yourself. I have done it many times, and always had a troubled conscience for my pains.

II. *Parent and Child.*—(1) The love of parents for their children is, of all natural affections, the most ill-starred. It is not a love for the person, since it begins before the person has come into the world, and founds on an imaginary character and looks. Thus it is foredoomed to disappointment; and because the parent either looks for too much, or at least for something inappropriate, at his offspring's hands, it is too often insufficiently repaid. The natural bond, besides, is stronger from parent to child than from child to parent; and it is the side which confers benefits, not which receives them, that thinks most of a relation. (2) What do we owe our parents? No man can *owe* love; none can *owe* obedience. We owe, I think, chiefly pity; for we are the pledge of their dear and joyful union, we have been the solicitude of their days and the anxiety of their nights; we have made them, though by no will of ours, to carry the burthen of our sins, sorrows, and physical infirmities; and too many of us grow up at length to disappoint the purpose of their lives and requite their care and piety with cruel pangs. (3) *Mater Dolorosa.* It is the particular cross of parents that when the child grows up and becomes himself instead of that pale ideal they had preconceived, they must accuse their own harshness or indulgence for this natural result. They have all been like the duck and hatched swan's eggs, or the other way about; yet they tell themselves with miserable penitence that the blame lies with them; and had they sat more closely, the swan would have been a duck, and home-keeping, in spite of all. (4) A good son, who can fulfil what is expected of him, has done his work in life. He has to redeem the sins of many, and restore the world's confidence in children.

III. *Dialogue on Character and Destiny between Two Puppets.*—At the end of Chapter xxxiii. Count Spada and the General of the Jesuits were left alone in the pavilion, while the course of the story was turned upon the doings of the virtuous hero. Profiting by this moment of privacy, the Jesuit turned with a very warning countenance upon the peer.

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"Have a care, my lord," said he, raising a finger. "You are already no favourite with the author; and for my part, I begin to perceive from a thousand evidences that the narrative is drawing near a close. Yet a chapter or two at most, and you will be overtaken by some sudden and appalling judgment."

"I despise your womanish presentiments," replied Spada, "and count firmly upon another volume; I see a variety of reasons why my life should be prolonged to within a few pages of the end; indeed, I permit myself to expect resurrection in a sequel, or second part. You will scarce suggest that there can be any end to the newspaper; and you will certainly never convince me that the author, who cannot be entirely without sense, would have been at so great pains with my intelligence, gallant exterior, and happy and natural speech, merely to kick me hither and thither for two or three paltry chapters and then drop me at the end like a dumb personage. I know you priests are often infidels in secret. Pray, do you believe in an author at all?"

"Many do not, I am aware," replied the General, softly; "even in the last chapter we encountered one, the self-righteous David Hume, who goes so far as to doubt the existence of the newspaper in which our adventures are now appearing; but it would neither become my cloth, nor do credit to my great experience, were I to meddle with these dangerous opinions. My alarm for you is not metaphysical, it is moral in its origin: You must be aware, my poor friend, that you are a very bad character—the worst, indeed, that I have met with in these pages. The author hates you, Count; and difficult as it may be to connect the idea of immortality—or, in plain terms, of a sequel—with the paper and printer's ink of which your humanity is made, it is yet more difficult to foresee anything but punishment and pain for one who is justly hateful in the eyes of his creator."

"You take for granted many things that I shall not be easily persuaded to allow," replied the villain. "Do you really so far deceive yourself in your imagination as to fancy that the author is a friend to good? Read; read the book in which you figure; and you will soon disown such crude vulgarities. Lelio is a good character; yet only two chapters ago we left him in a fine predicament. His old servant was a model of the virtues, yet did he not miserably perish in that ambuscade upon the road to Poitiers? And as for the family of the bankrupt merchant, how is it possible for greater moral qualities to be alive with more irremediable misfortunes? And yet you continue to misrepresent an author to yourself, as a deity devoted to virtue and inimical to vice? Pray, if you have no pride in your intellectual credit for yourself, spare at least the sensibilities of your associates."

"The purposes of the serial story," answered the Priest, "are doubtless for some wise reason, hidden from those who act in it. To this limitation we must bow. But I ask every character to observe narrowly his own personal relations to the author. There, if nowhere else, we may glean some hint of his superior designs. Now I am myself a mingled personage, liable to doubts, to scruples, and to sudden revulsions of feeling; I reason continually about life, and frequently the result of my reasoning is to condemn or even to change my action. I am now convinced, for example, that I did wrong in joining your plot against the innocent and most unfortunate Lelio. I told you so, you will remember, in the chapter which has just been concluded; and though I do not know whether you perceived the ardour and fluency with which I expressed myself, I am still confident in my own heart that I spoke at that moment not only with the warm approval, but under the direct inspiration, of the author of the tale. I know, Spada, I tell you I *know* that he loved me as I uttered these words; and yet at other periods of my career I have been conscious of his indifference and dislike. You must not seek to reason me from this conviction; for it is supplied me from higher authority than that of reason, and is, indeed, a part of my experience. It may be an illusion that I drove last night from Saumur; it may be an illusion that we are now in the garden chamber of the château;

it may be an illusion that I am conversing with Count Spada; you may be an illusion, Count, yourself; but of three things I will remain eternally persuaded, that the author exists not only in the newspaper but in my own heart, that he loves me when I do well, and that he hates and despises me when I do otherwise."

"I too believe in the author," returned the Count. "I believe likewise in a sequel, written in finer style and probably cast in a still higher rank of society than the present story; although I am not convinced that we shall then be conscious of our pre-existence here. So much of your argument is, therefore, beside the mark; for to a certain point I am as orthodox as yourself. But where you begin to draw general conclusions from your own private experience, I must beg pointedly and finally to differ. You will not have forgotten, I believe, my daring and single-handed butchery of the five secret witnesses? Nor the sleight of mind and dexterity of language with which I separated Lelio from the merchant's family? These were not virtuous actions; and yet, how am I to tell you? I was conscious of a troubled joy, a glee, a hellish gusto in my author's bosom, which seemed to renew my vigour with every sentence, and which has indeed made the first of these passages accepted for a model of spirited narrative description, and the second for a masterpiece of wickedness and wit. What result, then, can be drawn from two experiences so contrary as yours and mine? For my part, I lay it down as a principle, no author can be moral in a merely human sense. And, to pursue the argument higher, how can you, for one instant, suppose the existence of free will in puppets situated as we are in the thick of a novel which we do not even understand? And how, without free will upon our parts, can you justify blame or approval on that of the author? We are in his hands; by a stroke of the pen, to speak reverently, he made us what we are; by a stroke of the pen he can utterly undo and transmute what he has made. In the very next chapter, my dear General, you may be shown up for an impostor, or I be stricken down in the tears of penitence and hurried into the retirement of a monastery ! "

" You use an argument old as mankind, and difficult of answer," said the Priest. " I cannot justify the free will of which I am usually conscious ; nor will I ever seek to deny that this consciousness is interrupted. Sometimes events mount upon me with such swiftness and pressure that my choice is overwhelmed, and even to myself I seem to obey a will external to my own ; and again I am sometimes so paralysed and impotent between alternatives that I am tempted to imagine a hesitation on the part of my author. But I contend, upon the other hand, for a limited free will in the sphere of consciousness ; and as it is in and by my consciousness that I exist to myself, I will not go on to inquire whether that free will is valid as against the author, the newspaper, or even the readers of the story. And I contend, further, for a sort of empire or independence of our own characters when once created, which the author cannot or at least does not choose to violate. Hence Lelio was conceived upright, honest, courageous, and headlong ; to that first idea all his acts and speeches must of necessity continue to answer ; and the same, though with such different defects and qualities, applies to you, Count Spada, and to myself. We must act up to our characters ; it is these characters that the author loves or despises ; it is on account of them that we must suffer or triumph, whether in this work or in a sequel. Such is my belief."

" It is pure Calvinistic election, my dear sir, and, by your leave, a very heretical position for a churchman to support," replied the Count. " Nor can I see how it removes the difficulty. I was not consulted as to my character ; I might have chosen to be Lelio ; I might have chosen to be yourself ; I might even have preferred to figure in a different romance, or not to enter into the world of literature at all. And am I to be blamed or hated, because someone else wilfully and inhumanely made me what I am, and has continued ever since to encourage me in what are called my vices ? You may say what you please, my dear sir, but if that is the case, I had rather be a telegram from the seat of war than a reasonable and conscious character in a romance; nay, and I have a perfect right to repudiate, loathe, curse, and utterly condemn the ruffian who calls himself the author."

"You have, as you say, a perfect right," replied the Jesuit; "and I am convinced that it will not affect him in the least."

"He shall have one slave the fewer for me," added the Count. "I discard my allegiance once for all."

"As you please," concluded the other; "but at least be ready, for I perceive we are about to enter on the scene."

And indeed, just at that moment, Chapter xxxiv. being completed, Chapter xxxv., "The Count's Chastisement," began to appear in the columns of the newspaper. ✓

IV. *Solitude and Society*.—(1) A little society is needful to show a man his failings; for if he lives entirely by himself, he has no occasion to fall, and, like a soldier in time of peace, becomes both weak and vain. But a little solitude must be used, or we grow content with current virtues and forget the ideal. In society we lose scrupulous brightness of honour; in solitude we lose the courage necessary to face our own imperfections. (2) As a question of pleasure, after a man has reached a certain age, I can hardly perceive much room to choose between them: each is in a way delightful, and each will please best after an experience of the other. (3) But solitude for its own sake should surely never be preferred. We are bound by the strongest obligations to busy ourselves amid the world of men, if it be only to crack jokes. The finest trait in the character of St. Paul was his readiness to be damned for the salvation of anybody else. And surely we should all endure a little weariness to make one face look bright or one hour go more pleasantly in this mixed world. (4) It is our business here to speak, for it is by the tongue that we multiply ourselves most influentially. To speak kindly, wisely, and pleasantly is the first of duties, the easiest of duties, and the duty that is most blessed in its performance. For it is natural, it whiles away life, it spreads intelligence; and it increases the acquaintance of man with man. (5) It is, besides, a good investment, for while all other pleasures decay, and even the delight in nature, Grandfather William is still bent to gossip. (6) Solitude is the climax of the negative virtues. When we go to bed after a solitary day we can tell ourselves that we have not been unkind nor dishonest nor untruthful; and the negative virtues are agreeable to that dangerous faculty we call the conscience. That they should ever be admitted for a part of virtue is what I cannot explain. I do not care two straws for all the *nots*. (7) The positive virtues are imperfect; they are even ugly in their imperfection: for man's acts, by the necessity of his being, are coarse and mingled. The kindest, in the course of a day of active kindnesses, will say some things rudely, and do some things cruelly; the most honourable, perhaps, trembles at his nearness to a doubtful act. (8) Hence the solitary recoils from the practice of life, shocked by its unsightliness. But if I could only retain that superfine and guiding delicacy of the sense that grows in solitude, and still combine with it that courage of performance which is never abashed by any failure, but steadily pursues its right and human design in a scene of imperfection, I might hope to strike in the long run a conduct more tender to others and less humiliating to myself.

V. *Selfishness and Egoism.*—An unconscious, easy, selfish person shocks less, and is more easily loved, than one who is laboriously and egoistically unselfish. There is at least no fuss about the first; but the other parades his sacrifices, and so sells his favours too dear. Selfishness is calm, a force of nature: you might say the trees were selfish. But egoism is a piece of vanity; it must always take you into its confidence; it is uneasy, troublesome, seeking; it can do good, but not handsomely; it is uglier, because less dignified, than selfishness itself. But here I perhaps exaggerate to myself, because I am the one more than the other, and feel it like a hook in my mouth, at every step I take. Do what I will, this seems to spoil all.

VI. *Right and Wrong.*—It is the mark of a good action that it appears inevitable in the retrospect. We should have been cut-throats to do otherwise. And there's an end. We ought to know distinctly that we are damned for what we do wrong; but when we have done right, we have only been gentlemen, after all. There is nothing to make a work about.

VII. *Discipline of Conscience.*—(1) Never allow your mind to dwell on your own misconduct; that is ruin. The conscience has morbid sensibilities; it must be employed but not indulged, like the imagination or the stomach. (2) Let each stab suffice for the occasion; to play with this spiritual pain turns to penance; and a person easily learns to feel good by dallying with the consciousness of having done wrong. (3) Shut your eyes hard against the recollection of your sins. Do not be afraid, you will not be able to forget them. (4) You will always do wrong: you must try to get used to that, my son. It is a small matter to make a work about, when all the world is in the same case. I meant when I was a young man to write a great poem; and now I am cobbling little prose articles and in excellent good spirits, I thank you. So, too, I meant to lead a life that should keep mounting from the first; and though I have been repeatedly down again below sea-level, and am scarce higher than when I started, I am as keen as ever for that enterprise. Our business in this world is not to succeed, but to continue to fail, in good spirits. (5) There is but one test of a good life: that the man shall continue to grow more difficult about his own behaviour. That is to be good: there is no other virtue attainable. The virtues we admire in the saint and the hero are the fruits of a happy constitution. You, for your part, must not think you will ever be a good man, for these are born and not made. You will have your own reward, if you keep on growing better than you were—how do I say? if you do not keep on growing worse. (6) A man is one thing, and must be exercised in all his faculties. Whatever side of you is neglected, whether it is the muscles, or the taste for art, or the desire for virtue, that which is cultivated will suffer in proportion. X—— was greatly tempted, I remember, to do a very dishonest act, in order that he might pursue his studies in art. When he consulted me, I advised him not (putting it that way for once), because his art would suffer. (7) It might be fancied that if we could only study all sides of our being in an exact proportion, we should attain wisdom. But in truth a chief part of education is to exercise one set of faculties *à outrance*—one, since we have not the time so to practise all; thus the dilettante misses the kernel of the matter; and the man who has wrung forth the secret of one part of life knows more about the others than he who has tepidly circumnavigated all. (8) Thus, one must be your profession, the rest can only be your delights; and virtue had better be kept for the latter, for it enters into all, but none enters by necessity into it. You will learn a great deal of virtue by studying any art; but nothing of any art in the study of virtue. (9) The study of conduct has to do with grave problems; not every action should be higgled over; one of the leading virtues therein is to let oneself alone. But if you make it your chief employment, you are sure to meddle too much. This is the great error of those who are called pious. Although the war of virtue be unending except with life, hostilities are frequently suspended, and the troops go into winter quarters; but the pious will not profit by these times of truce; where their conscience can perceive no sin, they will find a sin in that very innocency; and so they pervert, to their annoyance, those seasons which God gives to us for repose and a reward. (10) The nearest approximation to sense in all this matter lies with the Quakers. There must be no *will*-worship; how much more, no *will*-repentance. The damnable consequences of set seasons, even for prayer, is to have a man continually posturing to himself, till his conscience is taught as many tricks as a pet monkey, and the gravest expressions are left with a perverted meaning. (11) For my part, I should try to secure some part of every day for meditation, above all in the early morning and the open air; but how that time was to be improved I should leave to circumstance and the inspiration of the hour. Nor if I spent it in whistling or numbering my footsteps, should I consider it misspent for that. I should have given my conscience a fair field; when it has anything to say, I know too well it can speak daggers; therefore, for this time, my hard taskmaster has given me a holy day, and I may go in again rejoicing to my breakfast and the human business of the day.

VIII. *Gratitude to God.*—(1) To the gratitude that becomes us in this life, I can set no limit. Though we steer after a fashion, yet we must sail according to the winds and currents. After what I have done, what might I not have done? That I have still the courage to attempt my life, that I am not now overladen with dishonours, to whom do I owe it but to the gentle ordering of circumstances in the great design? More has not been done to me than I can bear; I have been marvellously restrained and helped: not unto us, O Lord! (2) I cannot forgive God for the suffering of others; when I look abroad upon His world and behold its cruel destinies, I turn from Him with disaffection; nor do I conceive that He will blame me for the impulse. But when I consider my own fates, I grow conscious of His gentle dealing: I see Him chastise with helpful blows, I feel His stripes to be caresses; and this knowledge is my comfort that reconciles me to the world. (3) All those whom I now pity with indignation are perhaps not less fatherly dealt with than myself. I do right to be angry: yet they, perhaps, if they lay aside heat and temper, and reflect with patience on their lot, may find everywhere, in their worst trials, the same proofs of a divine affection. (4) While we have little to try us, we are angry with little; small annoyances do not bear their justification on their faces; but when we are overtaken by a great sorrow or perplexity, the greatness of our concern sobers us so that we see more clearly and think with more consideration. I speak for myself; nothing grave has yet befallen me but I have been able to reconcile my mind to its occurrence, and see in it, from my own little and partial point of view, an evidence of a tender and protecting God. Even the misconduct into which I have been led has been blessed to my improvement. If I did not sin, and that so glaringly that my conscience is convicted on the spot, I do not know what I should become, but I feel sure I should grow worse. The man of very regular conduct is too often a prig, if he be not worse—a rabbi. I, for my part, want to be startled out of my conceits; I want to be put to shame in my own eyes; I want to feel the bridle in my mouth, and be continually reminded of my own weakness and the omnipotence of circumstances. (5) If I from my spy-hole, looking with purblind eyes upon the least part of a fraction of the universe, yet perceive in my own destiny some broken evidences of a plan and some signals of an overruling goodness; shall I then be so mad as to complain that all cannot be deciphered? Shall I not rather wonder, with infinite and grateful surprise, that in so vast a scheme I seem to have been able to read, however little, and that that little was encouraging to faith?

IX. *Blame.*—What comes from without and what comes from within, how much of conduct proceeds from the spirit or how much from circumstances, what is the part of choice and what the part of the selection offered, where personal character begins or where, if anywhere, it escapes at all from the authority of nature, these are questions of curiosity and eternally indifferent to right and wrong. Our theory of blame is utterly sophisticated and untrue to man's experience. We are as much ashamed of a pimpled face that came to us by natural descent as of one that we have earned by our excesses, and rightly so; since the two cases, in so much as they unfit us for the easier sort of pleasing and put an obstacle in the path of love, are exactly equal in their consequences. We look aside from the true question. We cannot blame others at all; we can only punish them; and ourselves we blame indifferently for a deliberate crime, a thoughtless brusquerie, or an act done without volition in an ecstasy of madness. We blame ourselves from two considerations: first, because another has suffered; and second, because, in so far as we have again done wrong, we can look forward with the less confidence to what remains of our career. Shall we repent this failure? It is there that the consciousness of sin most cruelly affects us; it is in view of this that a man cries out, in exaggeration, that his heart is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things. We all tacitly subscribe this judgment: Woe unto him by whom offences shall come! We accept palliations for our neighbours; we dare not, in the sight of our own soul, accept them for ourselves. We may not be to blame; we may be conscious of no free will in the matter, of a possession, on the other hand, of an irresistible tyranny of circumstances,—yet we know, in another sense, we are to blame for all. Our right to live, to eat, to share in mankind's pleasures, lies precisely in this: that we must be persuaded we can on the whole live rather beneficially than hurtfully to others. Remove this persuasion, and the man has lost his right. That persuasion is our dearest jewel, to which we must sacrifice the life itself to which it entitles us. For it is better to be dead than degraded.

X. *Marriage.*—(1) No considerate man can approach marriage without deep concern. I, he will think, who have made hitherto so poor a business of my own life, am now about to embrace the responsibility of another's. Henceforth, there shall be two to suffer from my faults; and that other is the one whom I most desire to shield from suffering. In view of our impotence and folly, it seems an act of presumption to involve another's destiny with ours. We should hesitate to assume command of an army or a trading-smack; shall we not hesitate to become surety for the life and happiness, now and henceforward, of our dearest friend? To be nobody's enemy but one's own, although it is never possible to any, can least of all be possible to one who is married. (2) I would not so much fear to give hostages to fortune, if fortune ruled only in material things; but fortune, as we call those minor and more inscrutable workings of Providence, rules also in the sphere of conduct. I am not so blind but that I know I might be a murderer or even a traitor to-morrow ; and now, as if I were not already too feelingly alive to my misdeeds, I must choose out the one person whom I most desire to please, and make her the daily witness of my failures, I must give a part in all my dishonours to the one person who can feel them more keenly than myself. (3) In all our daring, magnanimous human way of life, I find nothing more bold than this. To go into battle is but a small thing by comparison. It is the last act of committal. After that, there is no way left, not even suicide, but to be a good man. (4) She will help you, let us pray. And yet she is in the same case ; she, too, has daily made shipwreck of her own happiness and worth ; it is with a courage no less irrational than yours, that she also ventures on this new experiment of life. Two who have failed severally now join their fortunes with a wavering hope. (5) But it is from the boldness of the enterprise that help springs. To take home to your hearth that living witness whose blame will most affect you, to eat, to sleep, to live with your most admiring and thence most exacting judge, is not this to domesticate the living God ? Each becomes a conscience to the other, legible like a clock upon the chimney-piece. Each offers to his mate a figure of the consequence of human acts. And while I may still continue by my inconsiderate or violent life to spread far-reaching havoc throughout man's confederacy, I can do so no more, at least, in ignorance and levity ; one face shall wince before me in the flesh ; I have taken home the sorrows I create to my own hearth and bed ; and though I continue to sin, it must be now with open eyes. ✓

XI. *Idleness and Industry.*—I remember a time when I was very idle ; and lived and profited by that humour. I have no idea why I ceased to be so, yet I scarce believe I have the power to return to it ; it is a change of age. I made consciously a thousand little efforts, but the determination from which these arose came to me while I slept and in the way of growth. I have had a thousand skirmishes to keep myself at work upon particular mornings, and sometimes the affair was hot ; but of that great change of campaign, which decided all this part of my life, and turned me from one whose business was to shirk into one whose business was to strive and persevere,—it seems as though all that had been done by some one else. The life of Goethe affected me ; so did that of Balzac ; and some very noble remarks by the latter in a pretty bad book, the *Cousine Bette*. I dare say I could trace some other influences in the change. All I mean is, I was never conscious of a struggle, nor registered a vow, nor seemingly had anything personally to do with the matter. I came about like a well-handled ship. There stood at the wheel that unknown steersman whom we call God.

XII. *Courage.*—Courage is the principal virtue, for all the others presuppose it. If you are afraid, you may do anything. Courage is to be cultivated, and some of the negative virtues may be sacrificed in the cultivation.

XIII. *Results of Action.*—The result is the reward of actions, not the test. The result is a child born ; if it be beautiful and healthy, well : if club-footed or crook-back, perhaps well also. We cannot direct. . . .

[1878 ?] 1.2

GENTLEMEN

I

WHAT do we mean to-day by that common phrase, a gentleman? By the lights of history, from *gens*, *gentilis*, it should mean a man of family, " one of a kent house," one of notable descent: thus embodying an ancient stupid belief and implying a modern scientific theory. The ancient and stupid belief came to the ground, with a prodigious dust and the collapse of several polities, in the latter half of the last century. There followed upon this an interregnum, during which it was believed that all men were born " free and equal," and that it really did not matter who your father was. Man has always been nobly irrational, bandaging his eyes against the facts of life, feeding himself on the wind of ambitious falsehood, counting his stock to be the children of the gods; and yet perhaps he never showed in a more touching light than when he embraced this boyish theory. Freedom we now know for a thing incompatible with corporate life and a blessing probably peculiar to the solitary robber; we know besides that every advance in richness of existence, whether moral or material, is paid for by a loss of liberty; that liberty is man's coin in which he pays his way; that luxury and knowledge and virtue, and love and the family affections, are all so many fresh fetters on the naked and solitary freeman. And the ancient stupid belief having come to the ground and the dust of its fall subsided, behold the modern scientific theory beginning to rise very nearly on the old foundation; and individuals no longer (as was fondly imagined) springing into life from God knows where, incalculable, untrammelled, abstract, equal to one another—but issuing modestly from a race; with virtues and vices, fortitudes and frailties, ready made; the slaves of their inheritance of blood; eternally unequal. So that we in the present, and yet more our scientific descendants in the future, must use, when we desire to praise a character, the old expression, gentleman, in nearly the old sense: one of a happy strain of blood, one fortunate in the descent from brave and self-respecting ancestors, whether clowns or counts.

And yet plainly this is of but little help. The intricacy of descent defies prediction; so that even the heir of a hundred sovereigns may be born a brute or a vulgarian. We may be told that a picture is an heirloom; that does not tell us what the picture represents. All qualities are inherited, and all characters; but which are the qualities that belong to the gentleman? what is the character that earns and deserves that honourable style?

II

The current ideas vary with every class, and need scarce be combated, need scarce be mentioned save for the love of fun. In one class, and not long ago, he was regarded as a gentleman who kept a gig. He is a gentleman in one house who does not eat peas with his knife; in another who is not to be discountenanced by any created form of butler. In my own case I have learned to move among pompous menials without much terror, never without much respect. In the narrow sense, and so long as they publicly tread the boards of their profession, it would be difficult to find more finished gentlemen; and it would often be a matter of grave thought with me, sitting in my club, to compare the bearing of the servants with that of those on whom they waited. There could be no question which were the better gentlemen. And yet I was hurried into no democratic theories; for I saw the members' part was the more difficult to play, I saw that to serve was a more graceful attitude than to be served, I knew besides that much of the servants' gentility was *ad hoc* and would be laid aside with their livery jackets; and to put the matter in a nutshell, that some of the members would have made very civil footmen and many of the servants intolerable members. For all that, one of the prettiest gentlemen I ever knew was a servant. A gentleman he happened to be, even in the old stupid sense, only on the wrong side of the blanket; and a man besides of much experience, having served in the Guards' Club, and been valet to old Cooke of the *Saturday Review*, and visited the States with Madame Sinico (I think it was) and Portugal with Madame Some-one-else, so that he had studied, at least from the chair-backs, many phases of society. It chanced he was waiter in a hotel where I was staying with my mother; it was midwinter and we were the only guests; all afternoons, he and I passed together on a perfect equality in the smoking-room; and at meal-time, he waited on my mother and me as a servant. Now here was a trial of manners from which few would have come forth successful. To take refuge in a frozen bearing would have been the timid, the inelegant, resource of almost all. My friend was much more bold; he joined in the talk, he ventured to be jocular, he pushed familiarity to the nice margin, and yet still preserved the indefinable and proper distance of the English servant, and yet never embarrassed, never even alarmed, the comrade with whom he had just been smoking a pipe. It was a masterpiece of social dexterity—on artificial lines no doubt, and dealing with difficulties that should never have existed, that exist much less in France, and that will exist nowhere long—but a masterpiece for all that, and one that I observed with despairing admiration, as I have watched Sargent paint.

I say these difficulties should never have existed; for the whole relation of master and servant is to-day corrupt and vulgar. At home in England it is the master who is degraded; here in the States, by a triumph of inverted tact, the servant often so contrives that he degrades himself. He must be above his place; and it is the mark of a gentleman to be at home. He thinks perpetually of his own dignity; it is the proof of a gentleman to be jealous of the dignity of others. He is ashamed of his trade, which is the essence of vulgarity. He is paid to do certain services; yet he does them so gruffly that any man of spirit would resent them if they were gratuitous favours; and this (if he will reflect upon it tenderly) is so far from the genteel as to be not even coarsely honest. Yet we must not blame the man for these mistakes; the vulgarity is in the air. There is a tone in popular literature much to be deplored; deprecating service, like a disgrace; honouring those who are ashamed of it; honouring even (I speak not without book) such as prefer to live by the charity of poor neighbours instead of blacking the shoes of the rich. Blacking shoes is counted (in these works) a thing specially disgraceful. To the philosophic mind, it will seem a less exceptionable trade than to deal in stocks, and one in which it is more easy to be honest than to write books. Why, then, should it be marked out for reprobation by the popular authors? It is taken, I think, for a type; inoffensive in itself, it stands for many disagreeable household duties; disagreeable to fulfil, I had nearly said shameful to impose; and with the dulness of their tribe, the popular authors transfer the shame to the wrong party. Truly, in this matter there seems a lack of gentility somewhere; a lack of refinement, of reserve, of common modesty; a strain of the spirit of those ladies in the past, who did not hesitate to bathe before a footman. And one thing at least is easy to prophesy, not many years will have gone by before those shall be held the most "elegant" gentlemen, and those the most "refined" ladies, who wait (in a dozen particulars) upon themselves. But the shame is for the masters only. The servant stands quite clear. He has one of the easiest parts to play upon the face of earth; he must be far misled, if he so grossly fails in it.

III

It is a fairly common accomplishment to behave with decency in one character and among those to whom we are accustomed and with whom we have been brought up. The trial of gentility lies in some such problem as that of my waiter's, in foreign travel, or in some sudden and sharp change of class. I once sailed on the emigrant side from the Clyde to New York ; among my fellow-passengers I passed generally as a mason, for the excellent reason that there was a mason on board *who happened to know ;* and this fortunate event enabled me to mix with these working people on a footing of equality. I thus saw them at their best, using their own civility ; while I, on the other hand, stood naked to their criticism. The workmen were at home, I was abroad, I was the shoe-black in the drawing-room, the Huron at Versailles ; and I used to have hot and cold fits, lest perchance I made a beast of myself in this new environment. I had no allowances to hope for ; I could not plead that I was " only a gentleman after all," for I was known to be a mason ; and I must stand and fall by my transplanted manners on their own intrinsic decency. It chanced there was a Welsh blacksmith on board, who was not only well-mannered himself and a judge of manners, but a fellow besides of an original mind. He had early diagnosed me for a masquerader and a person out of place ; and as we had grown intimate upon the voyage, I carried him my troubles. How did I behave ? Was I, upon this crucial test, at all a gentleman ? I might have asked eight hundred thousand blacksmiths (if Wales or the world contain so many) and they would have held my question for a mockery ; but Jones was a man of genuine perception, thought a long time before he answered, looking at me comically and reviewing (I could see) the events of the voyage, and then told me that " on the whole " I did " pretty well." Mr. Jones was a humane man and very much my friend, and he could get no further than " on the whole " and " pretty well." I was chagrined at the moment for myself ; on a larger basis of experience, I am now only concerned for my class. My co-equals would have done but little better, and many of them worse. Indeed, I have never seen a sight more pitiable than that of the current gentleman unbending ; unless it were the current lady! It is these stiff-necked condescensions, it is that graceless assumption, that make the diabolic element in times of riot. A man may be willing to starve in silence like a hero; it is a rare man indeed who can accept the unspoken slights of the unworthy, and not be embittered. There was a visit paid to the steerage quarters on this same voyage, by a young gentleman and two young ladies; and as I was by that time pretty well accustomed to the workman's standard, I had a chance to see my own class from below. God help them, poor creatures! As they ambled back to their saloon, they left behind, in the minds of my companions, and in my mind also, an image and an influence that might well have set them weeping, could they have guessed its nature. I spoke a few lines past of a shoe-black in a drawing-room; it is what I never saw; but I did see that young gentleman and these young ladies on the forward deck, and the picture remains with me, and the offence they managed to convey is not forgotten.

IV

And yet for all this ambiguity, for all these imperfect examples, we know clearly what we mean by the word. When we meet a gentleman of another class, through all contrariety of habits, the essentials of the matter stand confessed: I never had a doubt of Jones. More than that, we recognise the type in books; the actors of history, the characters of fiction, bear the mark upon their brow; at a word, by a bare act, we discern and segregate the mass, this one a gentleman, the others not. To take but the last hundred years, Scott, Gordon, Wellington in his cold way, Grant in his plain way, Shelley for all his follies, these were clearly gentlemen; Napoleon, Byron, Lockhart, these were as surely cads, and the two first cads of a rare water.

Let us take an anecdote of Grant and one of Wellington. On the day of the capitulation, Lee wore his presentation sword; it was the first thing Grant observed, and from that moment he had but one thought: how to avoid taking it. A man, who should perhaps have had the nature of an angel, but assuredly not the special virtues of the gentleman, might have received the sword, and no more words about it: he would have done well in a plain way. One who wished to be a gentleman, and knew not how, might have received and returned it: he would have done infamously ill, he would have proved himself a cad; taking the stage for himself, leaving to his adversary confusion of countenance and the ungraceful posture of the man condemned to offer thanks. Grant, without a word said, added to the terms this article: "All officers to retain their side-arms"; and the problem was solved and Lee kept his sword, and Grant went down to posterity, not perhaps a fine gentleman, but a great one. And now for Wellington. The tale is on a lower plane, is elegant rather than noble; yet it is a tale of a gentleman too, and raises besides a pleasant and instructive question. Wellington and Marshal Marmont were adversaries (it will not have been forgotten) in one of the prettiest recorded acts of military fencing, the campaign of Salamanca: it was a brilliant business on both sides, just what Count Tolstoi ought to study before he writes again upon the inutility of generals; indeed, it was so very brilliant on the Marshal's part that on the last day, in one of those extremes of cleverness that come so near stupidity, he fairly overreached himself, was taken "in flagrant delict," was beaten like a sack, and had his own arm shot off as a reminder not to be so clever the next time. It appears he was incurable; a more distinguished example of the same precipitate, ingenious blundering will be present to the minds of all —his treachery in 1814; and even the tale I am now telling shows, on a lilliputian scale, the man's besetting weakness. Years after Salamanca, the two generals met, and the Marshal (willing to be agreeable) asked the Duke his opinion of the battle. With that promptitude, wit, and willingness to spare pain which make so large a part of the armoury of the gentleman, Wellington had his answer ready, impossible to surpass on its own ground: "I early perceived your excellency had been wounded." And you see what a pleasant position he had created for the Marshal, who had no more to do than just to bow and smile and take the stage at his leisure. But here we come to our problem. The Duke's answer (whether true or false) created a pleasant position for the Marshal. But what sort of position had the Marshal's question created for the Duke? and had not Marmont the manœuvrer once more manœuvred himself into a false position? I conceive so. It is the man who has gained the victory, not the man who has suffered the defeat, who finds his ground embarrassing. The vanquished has an easy part, it is easy for him to make a handsome reference; but how hard for the victor to make a handsome reply! An unanswerable compliment is the social bludgeon; and Marmont (with the most graceful intentions in the world) had propounded one of the most desperate. Wellington escaped from his embarrassment by a happy and courtly inspiration. Grant, I imagine, since he had a genius for silence, would have found some means to hold his peace. Lincoln, with his half-tact and unhappy readiness, might have placed an appropriate anecdote and raised a laugh; not an unkindly laugh, for he was a kindly man; but under the circumstances the best-natured laugh would have been death to Marmont. Shelley (if we can conceive him to have gained a battle at all) would have blushed and stammered, feeling the Marshal's false position like some grossness of his own; and when the blush had communicated itself to the cheeks of his unlucky questioner, some stupid, generous word (such as I cannot invent for him) would have found its way to his lips and set them both at ease. Byron? well, he would have managed to do wrong; I have too little sympathy for that unmatched vulgarian to create his part. Napoleon? that would have depended: had he been angry, he would have left all competitors behind in cruel coarseness: had he been in a good humour, it might have been the other way. For this man, the very model of a cad, was so well served with truths by the clear insight of his mind, and with words by his great though shallow gift, of literature, that he has left behind him one of the most gentlemanly utterances on record: "*Madame, respectez le fardeau.*" And he could do the right thing too, as well as say it; and any character in history might envy him that moment when he gave his sword, the sword of the world-subduer, to his old, loyal enemy, Macdonald. A strange thing to consider two generations of a Skye family, and two generations of the same virtue, fidelity to the defeated: the father braving the rains of the Hebrides with the tattered beggar-lad that was his rightful sovereign; the son, in that princely house of Fontainebleau, himself a marshal of the Empire, receiving from the gratitude of one whom he had never feared and who had never loved him, the tool and symbol of the world's most splendid domination. I am glad, since I deal with the name of gentlemen, to touch for one moment on its nobler sense, embodied, on the historic scale and with epic circumstance, in the lives of these Macdonalds. Nor is there any man but must be conscious of a thrill of gratitude to Napoleon, for his worthy recognition of the worthiest virtue. Yes, that was done *like* a gentleman; and yet in our hearts we must think that it was done by a performer. For to feel precisely what it is to be a gentleman and what it is to be a cad, we have but to study Napoleon's attitude after Trafalgar, and compare it with that beautiful letter of Louis the Fourteenth's in which he acknowledges the news of Blenheim. We hear much about the Sun-king nowadays, and Michelet is very sad reading about his government, and Thackeray was very droll about his wig; but when we read this letter from the vainest king in Europe smarting under the deadliest reverse, we know that at least he was a gentleman. In the battle, Tallard had lost his son, Louis the primacy of Europe; it is only with the son the letter deals. Poor Louis! if his wig had been twice as great, and his sins twice as numerous, here is a letter to throw wide the gates of Heaven for his entrance. I wonder what would Louis have said to Marshal Marmont? Something infinitely condescending; for he was too much of a king to be quite a gentleman. And Marcus Aurelius, how would he have met the question? With some reference to the gods no doubt, uttered not quite without a twang; for the good emperor and great gentleman of Rome was of the Methodists of his day and race.

And now to make the point at which I have been aiming. The perfectly straightforward person who should have said to Marmont, "I was uncommonly glad to get you beaten," would have done the next best to Wellington who had the inspiration of graceful speech; just as the perfectly straightforward person who should have taken Lee's sword and kept it, would have done the next best to Grant who had the inspiration of the truly graceful act. Lee would have given up his sword and preserved his dignity; Marmont might have laughed, his pride need not have suffered. Not to try to spare people's feelings is so much kinder than to try in a wrong way; and not to try to be a gentleman at all is so much more gentlemanly than to try and fail! So that this gift, or grace, or virtue, resides not so much in conduct as in knowledge; not so much in refraining from the wrong, as in knowing the precisely right. A quality of exquisite aptitude marks out the gentlemanly act; without an element of wit, we can be only gentlemen by negatives.

V

More and more, as our knowledge widens, we have to reply to those who ask for a definition: "I can't give you that, but I will tell you a story." We cannot say what a thing will be, nor what it ought to be; but we can say what it has been, and how it came to be what it is: History instead of Definition. It is this which (if we continue teachable) will make short work of all political theories; it is on this we must fall back to explain our word, gentleman.

The life of our fathers was highly ceremonial; a man's steps were counted; his acts, his gestures were prescribed; marriage, sale, adoption, and not only legal contracts, but the simplest necessary movements, must be all conven tionally ordered and performed to rule. Life was a rehearsed piece; and only those who had been drilled in the rehearsals could appear with decency in the performance. A gentile man, one of a dominant race, hereditary priest, hereditary leader, was, by the circumstances of his birth and education, versed in this symbolic etiquette. Whatever circumstance arose, he would be prepared to utter the sacramental word, to perform the ceremonial act. For every exigence of family or tribal life, peace or war, marriage or sacrifice, fortune or mishap, he stood easily waiting, like the well-graced actor for his cue. The clan that he guided would be safe from shame, it would be ensured from loss; for the man's attitude would be always becoming, his bargains legal, and his sacrifices pleasing to the gods. It is from this gentile man, the priest, the chief, the expert in legal forms and attitudes, the bulwark and the ornament of his tribe, that our name of gentleman descends. So much of the sense still clings to it, it still points the man who, in every circumstance of life, knows what to do and how to do it gracefully; so much of its sense it has lost, for this grace and knowledge are no longer of value in practical affairs; so much of a new sense it has taken on, for as well as the nicest fitness, it now implies a punctual loyalty of word and act. And note the word loyalty; here is a parallel advance from the proficiency of the gentile man to the honour of the gentleman, and from the sense of legality to that of loyalty. With the decay of the ceremonial element in life, the gentleman has lost some of his prestige, I had nearly said some of his importance; and yet his part is the more difficult to play. It is hard to preserve the figures of a dance when many of our partners dance at random. It is easy to be a gentleman in a very stiff society, where much of our action is prescribed; it is hard indeed in a very free society where (as it seems) almost any word or act must come by inspiration. The rehearsed piece is at an end; we are now floundering through an impromptu charade. Far more of ceremonial remains (to be sure) traditional in the terms of our association, far more hereditary in the texture of brains, than is dreamed by the superficial; it is our fortress against many perils, the cement of states, the meeting ground of classes. But much of life comes up for the first time, unrehearsed, and must be acted on upon the instant. Knowledge there can here be none; the man must invent an attitude, he must be inspired with speech; and the most perfect gentleman is he who, in these irregular cases, acts and speaks with most aplomb and fitness. His tact simulates knowledge; to see him so easy and secure and graceful you would think he had been through it all before; you would think he was the gentile man of old, repeating for the thousandth time, upon some public business, the sacramental words and ceremonial gestures of his race.

Lastly, the club footman, so long as he is in his livery jacket, appears the perfect gentleman and visibly outshines the members; and the same man, in the public-house, among his equals, becomes perhaps plain and dull, perhaps even brutal. He has learned the one part of service perfectly; there he has knowledge, he shines in the prepared performance; outside of that he must rely on tact, and sometimes flounders sadly in the unrehearsed charade. The gentleman, again, may be put to open shame as he changes from one country, or from one rank of society to another. The footman was a gentleman only *ad hoc;* the other (at the most) *ad hæc;* and when he has got beyond his knowledge, he begins to flounder in the charade. Even so the gentile man was only gentile among those of his own gens and their subordinates and neighbours; in a distant city, he too was peregrine and inexpert, and must become the client of another, or find his bargains insecure and be excluded from the service of the gods.

SOME GENTLEMEN IN FICTION

I

TO make a character at all—so to select, so to describe a few acts, a few speeches, perhaps (though this is quite superfluous) a few details of physical appearance, as that these shall all cohere and strike in the reader's mind a common note of personality—there is no more delicate enterprise, success is nowhere less comprehensible than here. We meet a man, we find his talk to have been racy; and yet if every word were taken down by shorthand, we should stand amazed at its essential insignificance. Physical presence, the speaking eye, the inimitable commentary of the voice, it was in these the spell resided; and these are all excluded from the pages of the novel. There is one writer of fiction whom I have the advantage of knowing; and he confesses to me that his success in this matter (small though it be) is quite surprising to himself. "In one of my books," he writes, "and in one only, the characters took the bit in their mouth; all at once, they became detached from the flat paper, they turned their backs on me and walked off bodily; and from that time, my task was stenographic—it was they who spoke, it was they who wrote the remainder of the story. When this miracle of genesis occurred, I was thrilled with joyous surprise; I felt a certain awe—shall we call it superstitious? And yet how small a miracle it was; with what a partial life were my characters endowed; and when all was said, how little did I know of them! It was a form of words that they supplied me with; it was in a form of words that they consisted; beyond and behind was nothing." The limitation, which this writer felt and which he seems to have deplored, can be remarked in the work of even literary princes. I think it was Hazlitt who declared that, if the names were dropped at press, he could restore any speech in Shakespeare to the proper speaker; and I daresay we could all pick out the words of Nym or Pistol, Caius or Evans; but not even Hazlitt could do the like for the great leading characters, who yet are cast in a more delicate mould, and appear before us far more subtly and far more fully differentiated, than these easy-going ventriloquial puppets. It is just when the obvious expedients of the barrel-organ vocabulary, the droll mispronunciation or the racy dialect, are laid aside, that the true masterpieces are wrought (it would seem) from nothing. Hamlet speaks in character, I potently believe it, and yet see not how. He speaks at least as no man ever spoke in life, and very much as many other heroes do in the same volume; now uttering the noblest verse, now prose of the most cunning workmanship; clothing his opinions throughout in that amazing dialect, Shakespearese. The opinions themselves, again, though they are true and forcible and reinforced with excellent images, are not peculiar either to Hamlet, or to any man or class or period; in their admirable generality of appeal resides their merit; they might figure, and they would be applauded, in almost any play and in the mouth of almost any noble and considerate character.—The only hint that is given as to his physical man—I speak for myself—is merely shocking, seems merely erroneous, and is perhaps best explained away upon the theory that Shakespeare had Burbage more directly in his eye than Hamlet. As for what the Prince does and what he refrains from doing, all acts and passions are strangely impersonal. A thousand characters, as different among themselves as night from day, should yet, under the like stress of circumstance, have trodden punctually in the footprints of Hamlet and each other. Have you read *André Cornélis?* in which M. Bourget handled over again but yesterday the theme of *Hamlet*, even as Godwin had already rehandled part of it in *Caleb Williams*. You can see the character M. Bourget means with quite sufficient clearness; it is not a masterpiece, but it is adequately indicated; and the character is proper to the part, these acts and passions fit him like a glove, he carries the tale, not with so good a grace as Hamlet, but with equal nature. Well, the two personalities are fundamentally distinct: they breathe upon us out of different worlds; in face, in touch, in the subtile atmosphere by which we recognise an individual, in all that goes to build up a character—or at least that shadowy thing, a character in a book—they are even opposed: the same fate involves them, they behave on the same lines, and they have not one hair in common. What, then, remains of Hamlet? and by what magic does he stand forth in our brains, *teres atque rotundus*, solid to the touch, a man to praise, to blame, to pity, ay, and to love? ✓1·2 -

At bottom, what we hate or love is doubtless some projection of the author; the personal atmosphere is doubtless his; and when we think we know Hamlet, we know but a side of his creator. It is a good old comfortable doctrine, which our fathers have taken for a pillow, which has served as a cradle for ourselves; and yet, in some of its applications, it brings us face to face with difficulties. I said last month that we could tell a gentleman in a novel. Let us continue to take Hamlet. Manners vary, they invert themselves, from age to age; Shakespeare's gentlemen are not quite ours, there is no doubt their talk would raise a flutter in a modern tea-party; but in the old pious phrase, they have the root of the matter. All the most beautiful traits of the gentleman adorn this character of Hamlet: it was the side on which Salvini seized, which he so attractively displayed, with which he led theatres captive; it is the side, I think, by which the Prince endears himself to readers. It is true there is one staggering scene, the great scene with his mother. But we must regard this as the author's lost battle; here it was that Shakespeare failed: what to do with the Queen, how to depict her, how to make Hamlet use her, these (as we know) were his miserable problem; it beat him; he faced it with an indecision worthy of his hero; he shifted, he shuffled with it; in the end, he may be said to have left his paper blank. One reason why we do not more generally recognise this failure of Shakespeare's is because we have most of us seen the play performed; and managers, by what seems a stroke of art, by what is really (I dare say) a fortunate necessity, smuggle the problem out of sight—the play, too, for the matter of that; but the glamour of the footlights and the charm of that little strip of fiddlers' heads and elbows, conceal the conjuring. This stroke of art (let me call it so) consists in casting the Queen as an old woman. Thanks to the footlights and the fiddlers' heads, we never pause to inquire why the King should have pawned his soul for this college-bedmaker in masquerade; and thanks to the absurdity of the whole position, and that unconscious unchivalry of audiences (ay, and of authors also) to old women, Hamlet's monstrous conduct passes unobserved or unresented. Were the Queen cast as she should be, a woman still young and beautiful, had she been coherently written by Shakespeare, and were she played with any spirit, even an audience would rise.

But the scene is simply false, effective on the stage, untrue of any son or any mother; in judging the character of Hamlet, it must be left upon one side; and in all other relations we recognise the Prince for a gentleman.

Now, if the personal charm of any verbal puppet be indeed only an emanation from its author, may we conclude, since we feel Hamlet to be a gentleman, that Shakespeare was one too? An instructive parallel occurs. There were in England two writers of fiction, contemporaries, rivals in fame, opposites in character; one descended from a great house, easy, generous, witty, debauched, a favourite in the tap-room and the hunting field, yet withal a man of a high practical intelligence, a distinguished public servant, an ornament of the bench: the other, sprung from I know not whence—but not from kings—buzzed about by second-rate women, and their fit companion, a tea-bibber in parlours, a man of painful propriety, with all the narrowness and much of the animosity of the backshop and the dissenting chapel. Take the pair, they seem like types: Fielding, with all his faults, was undeniably a gentleman; Richardson, with all his genius and his virtues, as undeniably was not. And now turn to their works. In *Tom Jones*, a novel of which the respectable profess that they could stand the dulness if it were not so blackguardly, and the more honest admit they could forgive the blackguardism if it were not so dull—in *Tom Jones*, with its voluminous bulk and troops of characters, there is no shadow of a gentleman, for Allworthy is only ink and paper. In *Joseph Andrews*, I fear I have always confined my reading to the parson; and Mr. Adams, delightful as he is, has no pretension "to the genteel." In *Amelia*, things get better; all things get better; it is one of the curiosities of literature that Fielding, who wrote one book that was engaging, truthful, kind, and clean, and another book that was dirty, dull, and false, should be spoken of, the world over, as the author of the second and not the first, as the author of *Tom Jones*, not of *Amelia*. And in *Amelia*, sure enough, we find some gentlefolk; Booth and Dr. Harrison will pass in a crowd, I dare not say they will do more. It is very differently that one must speak of Richardson's creations. With Sir Charles Grandison I am unacquainted—there are many impediments in this brief life of man; I have more than once, indeed, reconnoitred the first volume with a flying party, but always decided not to break ground before the place till my siege guns came up; and it's an odd thing—I have been all these years in the field, and that powerful artillery is still miles in the rear. The day it overtakes me, Baron Gibbon's fortress shall be beat about his ears, and my flag be planted on the formidable ramparts of the second part of *Faust*. Clarendon, too—— But why should I continue this confession? Let the reader take up the wondrous tale himself, and run over the books that he has tried, and failed withal, and vowed to try again, and now beholds, as he goes about a library, with secret compunction. As to Sir Charles at least, I have the report of spies; and by the papers in the office of my Intelligence

Department, it would seem he was a most accomplished baronet. I am the more ready to credit these reports, because the spies are persons thoroughly accustomed to the business; and because my own investigation of a kindred quarter of the globe (*Clarissa Harlowe*) has led me to set a high value on the Richardsonians. Lovelace—in spite of his abominable misbehaviour—Colonel Morden and my Lord M—— are all gentlemen of undisputed quality. They more than pass muster, they excel; they have a gallant, a conspicuous carriage; they roll into the book, four in hand, in gracious attitudes. The best of Fielding's gentlemen had scarce been at their ease in M—— Hall; Dr. Harrison had seemed a plain, honest man, a trifle below his company; and poor Booth (supposing him to have served in Colonel Morden's corps and to have travelled in the post-chaise along with his commandant) had been glad to slink away with Mowbray and crack a bottle in the butler's room.

So that here, on the terms of our theory, we have an odd inversion, tempting to the cynic.

II

Just the other day, there were again two rival novelists in England: Thackeray and Dickens; and the case of the last is, in this connection, full of interest. Here was a man and an artist, the most strenuous, one of the most endowed; and for how many years he laboured in vain to create a gentleman! With all his watchfulness of men and manners, with all his fiery industry, with his exquisite native gift of characterisation, with his clear knowledge of what he meant to do, there was yet something lacking. In part after part, novel after novel, a whole menagerie of characters, the good, the bad, the droll, and the tragic, came at his beck like slaves about an Oriental despot; there was only one who stayed away: the gentleman. If this ill fortune had persisted it might have shaken man's belief in art and industry. But years were given and courage was continued to the indefatigable artist; and at length, after so many and such lamentable failures, success began to attend upon his arms. David Copperfield scrambled through on hands and knees; it was at least a negative success; and Dickens, keenly alive to all he did, must have heaved a sigh of infinite relief. Then came the evil days, the days of *Dombey* and *Dorrit*, from which the lover of Dickens willingly averts his eyes; and when that temporary blight had passed away, and the artist began with a more resolute arm to reap the aftermath of his genius, we find him able to create a Carton, a Wrayburn, a Twemlow. No mistake about these three; they are all gentlemen: the sottish Carton, the effete Twemlow, the insolent Wrayburn, all have doubled the cape.

There were never in any book three perfect sentences on end; there was never a character in any volume but it somewhere tripped. We are like dancing dogs and preaching women: the wonder is not that we should do it well, but that we should do it at all. And Wrayburn, I am free to admit, comes on one occasion to the dust. I mean, of course, the scene with the old Jew. I will make you a present of the Jew for a card-board figure; but that is neither here nor there: the ineffectuality of the one presentment does not mitigate the grossness, the baseness, the inhumanity of the other. In this scene, and in one other (if I remember aright) where it is echoed, Wrayburn combines the wit of the omnibus-cad with the good feeling of the Andaman Islander: in all the remainder of the book, throughout a thousand perils, playing (you would say) with difficulty, the author swimmingly steers his hero on the true course. The error stands by itself, and it is striking to observe the moment of its introduction. It follows immediately upon one of the most dramatic passages in fiction, that in which Bradley Headstone barks his knuckles on the churchyard wall. To handle Bradley (one of Dickens's superlative achievements) were a thing impossible to almost any man but his creator; and even to him, we may be sure, the effort was exhausting. Dickens was a weary man when he had barked the schoolmaster's knuckles, a weary man and an excited; but the tale of bricks had to be finished, the monthly number waited; and under the false inspiration of irritated nerves, the scene of Wrayburn and the Jew was written and sent forth; and there it is, a blot upon the book and a buffet to the reader.

I make no more account of this passage than of that other in *Hamlet*: a scene that has broken down, the judicious reader cancels for himself. And the general tenor of Wrayburn, and the whole of Carton and Twemlow, are beyond exception. Here, then, we have a man who found it for years an enterprise beyond his art to draw a gentleman, and who in the end succeeded. Is it because Dickens was not a gentleman himself that he so often failed? and if so, then how did he succeed at last? Is it because he was a gentleman that he succeeded? and if so, what made him fail? I feel inclined to stop this paper here, after the manner of conundrums, and offer a moderate reward for a solution. But the true answer lies probably deeper than did ever plummet sound. And mine (such as it is) will hardly appear to the reader to disturb the surface.

These verbal puppets (so to call them once again) are things of a divided parentage: the breath of life may be an emanation from their maker, but they themselves are only strings of words and parts of books; they dwell in, they belong to, literature; convention, technical artifice, technical gusto, the mechanical necessities of the art, these are the flesh and blood with which they are invested. If we look only at Carton and Wrayburn, both leading parts, it must strike us at once that both are most ambitiously attempted; that Dickens was not content to draw a hero and a gentleman plainly and quietly; that, after all his ill-success, he must still handicap himself upon these fresh adventures, and make Carton a sot, and sometimes a cantankerous sot, and Wrayburn insolent to the verge, and sometimes beyond the verge, of what is pardonable. A moment's thought will show us this was in the nature of his genius, and a part of his literary method.

His fierce intensity of design was not to be slaked with any academic portraiture; not all the arts of individualisation could perfectly content him; he must still seek something more definite and more express than nature. All artists, it may be properly argued, do the like; it is their method to discard the middling and the insignificant, to disengage the charactered and the precise. But it is only a class of artists that pursue so singly the note of personality; and is it not possible that such a preoccupation may disable men from representing gentlefolk? The gentleman passes in the stream of the day's manners, inconspicuous. The lover of the individual may find him scarce worth drawing. And even if he draw him, on what will his attention centre but just upon those points in which his model exceeds or falls short of his subdued ideal—but just upon those points in which the gentleman is not genteel? Dickens, in an hour of irritated nerves, and under the pressure of the monthly number, defaced his Wrayburn. Observe what he sacrifices. The ruling passion strong in his hour of weakness, he sacrifices dignity, decency, the essential human beauties of his hero; he still preserves the dialect, the shrill note of personality, the mark of identification. Thackeray, under the strain of the same villainous system, would have fallen upon the other side; his gentleman would still have been a gentleman, he would have only ceased to be an individual figure.

There are incompatible ambitions. You cannot paint a Vandyke and keep it a Franz Hals.

III

I have preferred to conclude my inconclusive argument before I touched on Thackeray. Personally, he scarce appeals to us as the ideal gentleman; if there were nothing else, perpetual nosing after snobbery at least suggests the snob; but about the men he made, there can be no such question of reserve. And whether because he was himself a gentleman in a very high degree, or because his methods were in a very high degree suited to this class of work, or from the common operation of both causes, a gentleman came from his pen by the gift of nature. He could draw him as a character part, full of pettiness, tainted with vulgarity, and yet still a gentleman, in the inimitable Major Pendennis. He could draw him as the full-blown hero in Colonel Esmond. He could draw him —the next thing to the work of God—human and true and noble and frail, in Colonel Newcome. If the art of being a gentleman were forgotten, like the art of staining glass, it might be learned anew from that one character. It is learned there, I dare to say, daily. Mr. Andrew Lang, in a graceful attitude of melancholy, denies the influence of books. I think he forgets his philosophy ; for surely there go two elements to the determination of conduct : heredity, and experience—that which is given to us at birth, that which is added and cancelled in the course of life ; and what experience is more formative, what step of life is more efficient, than to know and weep for Colonel Newcome ? And surely he forgets himself ; for I call to mind other pages, beautiful pages, from which it may be gathered that the language of *The Newcomes* sings still in his memory, and its gospel is sometimes not forgotten. I call it a gospel : it is the best I know. Error and suffering and failure and death, those calamities that our contemporaries paint upon so vast a scale—they are all depicted here, but in a more true proportion. We may return, before this picture, to the simple and ancient faith. We may be sure (although we know not why) that we give our lives, like coral insects, to build up insensibly, in the twilight of the seas of time, the reef of righteousness. And we may be sure (although we see not how) it is a thing worth doing.

THE DAY AFTER TO-MORROW

HISTORY is much decried; it is a tissue of errors, we are told, no doubt correctly; and rival historians expose each other's blunders with gratification. Yet the worst historian has a clearer view of the period he studies than the best of us can hope to form of that in which we live. The obscurest epoch is to-day; and that for a thousand reasons of inchoate tendency, conflicting report, and sheer mass and multiplicity of experience; but chiefly, perhaps, by reason of an insidious shifting of landmarks. Parties and ideas continually move, but not by measurable marches on a stable course; the political soil itself steals forth by imperceptible degrees, like a travelling glacier, carrying on its bosom not only political parties but their flag-posts and cantonments; so that what appears to be an eternal city founded on hills is but a flying island of Laputa. It is for this reason in particular that we are all becoming Socialists without knowing it; by which I would not in the least refer to the acute case of Mr. Hyndman and his horn-blowing supporters, sounding their trumps of a Sunday within the walls of our individualist Jericho, but to the stealthy change that has come over the spirit of Englishmen and English legislation. A little while ago, and we were still for liberty; "Crowd a few more thousands on the bench of Government," we seemed to cry; "keep her head direct on liberty, and we cannot help but come to port." This is over; *laissez-faire* declines in favour; our legislation grows authoritative, grows philanthropical, bristles with new duties and new penalties, and casts a spawn of inspectors, who now begin, note-book in hand, to darken the face of England. It may be right or wrong, we are not trying that; but one thing it is beyond doubt: it is Socialism in action, and the strange thing is that we scarcely know it.

Liberty has served us a long while, and it may be time to seek new altars. Like all other principles, she has been proved to be self-exclusive in the long run. She has taken wages besides (like all other virtues) and dutifully served Mammon; so that many things we were accustomed to admire as the benefits of freedom and common to all were truly benefits of wealth, and took their value from our neighbours' poverty. A few shocks of logic, a few disclosures (in the journalistic phrase) of what the freedom of manufacturers, landlords, or shipowners may imply for operatives, tenants, or seamen, and we not unnaturally begin to turn to that other pole of hope, beneficent tyranny. Freedom, to be desirable, involves kindness, wisdom, and all the virtues of the free; but the free man as we have seen him in action has been, as of yore, only the master of many helots; and the slaves are still ill fed, ill clad, ill taught, ill housed, insolently treated, and driven to their mines and workshops by the lash of famine. So much in other men's affairs, we have begun to see clearly; we have begun to despair of virtue in these other men, and from our seat in Parliament begin to discharge upon them, thick as arrows, the host of our inspectors. The landlord has long shaken his head over the manufacturer; those who do business on land have lost all trust in the virtues of the shipowner; the professions look askance upon the retail traders and have even started their co-operative stores to ruin them; and from out the smoke-wreaths of Birmingham a finger has begun to write upon the wall the condemnation of the landlord. Thus, piece by piece, do we condemn each other, and yet not perceive the conclusion, that our whole estate is somewhat damnable. Thus, piece by piece, each acting against his neighbour, each sawing away the branch on which some other interest is seated, do we apply in detail our Socialistic remedies, and yet not perceive that we are all labouring together to bring in Socialism at large. A tendency so stupid and so selfish is like to prove invincible; and if Socialism be at all a practi cable rule of life, there is every chance that our grandchildren will see the day and taste the pleasures of existence in something far liker an ant-heap than any previous human polity. And this not in the least because of the voice of Mr. Hyndman or the horns of his followers; but by the mere glacier movement of the political soil, bearing forward on its bosom, apparently undisturbed, the proud camps of Whig and Tory. If Mr. Hyndman were a man of keen humour, which is far from my conception of his character, he might rest from his troubling and look on: the walls of Jericho begin already to crumble and dissolve. That great servile war, the Armageddon of money and numbers, to which we looked forward when young, becomes more and more unlikely, and we may rather look to see a peaceable and blindfold evolution, the work of dull men immersed in political tactics and dead to political results.

The principal scene of this comedy lies, of course, in the House of Commons; it is there, besides, that the details of this new evolution (if it proceed) will fall to be decided; so that the state of Parliament is not only diagnostic of the present but fatefully prophetic of the future. Well, we all know what Parliament is, and we are all ashamed of it. We may pardon it some faults, indeed, on the ground of Irish obstruction—a bitter trial, which it supports with notable good-humour. But the excuse is merely local; it cannot apply to similar bodies in America and France; and what are we to say of these? President Cleveland's letter may serve as a picture of the one; a glance at almost any paper will convince us of the weakness of the other. Decay appears to have seized on the organ of popular government in every land; and this just at the moment when we begin to bring to it, as to an oracle of justice, the whole skein of our private affairs to be unravelled, and ask it, like a new Messiah, to take upon itself our frailties and play for us the part that should be played by our own virtues. For that, in few words, is the case. We cannot trust ourselves to behave with decency; we cannot trust our consciences; and the remedy proposed is to elect a round number of our neighbours, pretty much at random, and say to these: "Be ye our conscience; make laws so wise, and continue from year to year to administer them so wisely, that they shall save us from ourselves and make us righteous and happy, world without end. Amen." And who can look twice at the British Parliament and then seriously bring it such a task? I am not advancing this as an argument against Socialism; once again, nothing is further from my mind. There are great truths in Socialism, or no one, not even Mr. Hyndman, would be found to hold it; and if it came, and did one-tenth part of what it offers, I for one should make it welcome. But if it is to come, we may as well have some notion of what it will be like; and the first thing to grasp is that our new polity will be designed and administered (to put it courteously) with something short of inspiration. It will be made, or will grow, in a human parliament; and the one thing that will not very hugely change is human nature. The Anarchists think otherwise, from which it is only plain that they have not carried to the study of history the lamp of human sympathy.

Given, then, our new polity, with its new waggonload of laws, what head-marks must we look for in the life? We chafe a good deal at that excellent thing, the income-tax, because it brings into our affairs the prying fingers, and exposes us to the tart words, of the official. The official, in all degrees, is already something of a terror to many of us. I would not willingly have to do with even a police constable in any other spirit than that of kindness. I still remember in my dreams the eye-glass of a certain *attaché* at a certain embassy—an eye-glass that was a standing indignity to all on whom it looked; and my next most disagreeable remembrance is of a bracing, Republican postman in the city of San Francisco. I lived in that city among working-folk, and what my neighbours accepted at the postman's hands—nay, what I took from him myself—it is still distasteful to recall. The bourgeois, residing in the upper parts of society, has but few opportunities of tasting this peculiar bowl; but about the income-tax, as I

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have said, or perhaps about a patent, or in the halls of an embassy at the hands of my friend of the eye-glass, he occasionally sets his lips to it; and he may thus imagine (if he has that faculty of imagination, without which most faculties are void) how it tastes to his poorer neighbours, who must drain it to the dregs. In every contact with authority, with their employer, with the police, with the School Board officer, in the hospital, or in the workhouse, they have equally the occasion to appreciate the light-hearted civility of the man in office; and as an experimentalist in several out-of-the-way provinces of life, I may say it has but to be felt to be appreciated. Well, this golden age of which we are speaking will be the golden age of officials. In all our concerns it will be their beloved duty to meddle, with what tact, with what obliging words, analogy will aid us to imagine. It is likely these gentlemen will be periodically elected; they will therefore have their turn of being underneath, which does not always sweeten men's conditions. The laws they will have to administer will be no clearer than those we know to-day, and the body which is to regulate their administration no wiser than the British Parliament. So that upon all hands we may look for a form of servitude most galling to the blood—servitude to many and changing masters—and for all the slights that accompany the rule of Jack in office. And if the Socialistic programme be carried out with the least fulness, we shall have lost a thing in most respects not much to be regretted, but, as a moderator of oppression, a thing nearly invaluable—the newspaper. For the independent journal is a creature of capital and competition; it stands and falls with millionaires and railway-bonds and all the abuses and glories of to-day; and as soon as the State has fairly taken its bent to authority and philanthropy, and laid the least touch on private property, the days of the independent journal are numbered. State railways may be good things, and so may State bakeries; but a State newspaper will never be a very trenchant critic of the State officials.

But again, these officials would have no sinecure. Crime would perhaps be less, for some of the motives of crime we may suppose would pass away. But if Socialism were carried out with any fulness, there would be more contraventions. We see already new sins springing up like mustard—School Board sins, factory sins, Merchant Shipping Act sins—none of which I would be thought to except against in particular, but all of which, taken together, show us that Socialism can be a hard master even in the beginning. If it go on to such heights as we hear proposed and lauded, if it come actually to its ideal of the ant-heap, ruled with iron justice, the number of new contraventions will be out of all proportions multiplied. Take the case of work alone. Man is an idle animal. He is at least as intelligent as the ant; but generations of advisers have in vain recommended him the ant's example. Of those who are found truly indefatigable in business, some are misers; some are the practisers of delightful industries, like gardening; some are students, artists, inventors, or discoverers, men lured forward by successive hopes; and the rest are those who live by games of skill or hazard—financiers, billiard-players, gamblers, and the like. But in unloved toils, even under the prick of necessity, no man is continually sedulous. Once eliminate the fear of starvation, once eliminate or bound the hope of riches, and we shall see plenty of skulking and malingering. Society will then be something not wholly unlike a cotton plantation in the old days; with cheerful, careless, demoralised slaves, with elected overseers, and, instead of the planter, a chaotic popular assembly. If the blood be purposeful and the soil strong, such a plantation may succeed, and be, indeed, a busy ant-heap, with full granaries and long hours of leisure. But even then I think the whip will be in the overseer's hand, and not in vain. For, when it comes to be a question of each man doing his own share or the rest doing more, prettiness of sentiment will be forgotten. To dock the skulker's food is not enough; many will rather eat haws and starve on petty pilferings than put their shoulder to the wheel for one hour daily. For such as these, then, the whip will be in the overseer's hand; and his own sense of justice, and the superintendence of chaotic popular assembly will be the only checks on its employment. Now, you may be an industrious man and a good citizen, and yet not love, nor yet be loved by Dr. Fell the inspector. It is admitted by private soldiers that the disfavour of a sergeant is an evil not to be combated; offend the sergeant, they say, and in a brief while you will either be disgraced or have deserted. And the sergeant can no longer appeal to the lash. But if these things go on, we shall see, or our sons shall see, what it is to have offended an inspector.

This for the unfortunate. But with the fortunate also, even those whom the inspector loves, it may not be altogether well. It is concluded that in such a state of society, supposing it to be financially sound, the level of comfort will be high. It does not follow: there are strange depths of idleness in man, a too-easily-got sufficiency, as in the case of the sago-eaters, often quenching the desire for all besides; and it is possible that the men of the richest ant-heaps may sink even into squalor. But suppose they do not; suppose our tricksy instrument of human nature, when we play upon it this new tune, should respond kindly; suppose no one to be damped and none exasperated by the new conditions, the whole enterprise to be financially sound—a vaulting supposition—and all the inhabitants to dwell together in a golden mean of comfort: we have yet to ask ourselves if this be what man desire, or if it be what man will even deign to accept for a continuance. It is certain that man loves to eat; it is not certain that he loves that only or that best. He is supposed to love comfort; it is not a love, at least, that he is faithful to. He is supposed to love happiness; it is my contention that he rather loves excitement. Danger, enterprise, hope, the novel, the aleatory, are dearer to man than regular meals. He does not think so when he is hungry, but he thinks so again as soon as he is fed; and on the hypothesis of a successful ant-heap, he would never go hungry. It would be always after dinner in that society, as, in the land of the Lotus-eaters, it was always afternoon; and food, which, when we have it not, seems all-important, drops in our

evening

esteem, as soon as we have it, to a mere prerequisite of living.

That for which man lives is not the same thing for all individuals nor in all ages; yet it has a common base; what he seeks and what he must have is that which will seize and hold his attention. Regular meals and weatherproof lodgings will not do this long. Play in its wide sense, as the artificial induction of sensation, including all games and all arts, will, indeed, go far to keep him conscious of himself; but in the end he wearies for realities. Study or experiment, to some rare natures, is the unbroken pastime of a life. These are enviable natures; people shut in the house by sickness often bitterly envy them; but the commoner man cannot continue to exist upon such altitudes; his feet itch for physical adventure; his blood boils for physical dangers, pleasures, and triumphs; his fancy, the looker after new things, cannot continue to look for them in books and crucibles, but must seek them on the breathing stage of life. Pinches, buffets, the glow of hope, the shock of disappointment, furious contention with obstacles: these are the true elixir for all vital spirits, these are what they seek alike in their romantic enterprises and their unromantic dissipations. When they are taken in some pinch closer than the common, they cry, "Catch me here again!" and sure enough you catch them there again—perhaps before the week is out. It is as old as *Robinson Crusoe*; as old as man. Our race has not been strained for all these ages through that sieve of dangers that we call Natural Selection, to sit down with patience in the tedium of safety; the voices of its fathers call it forth. Already in our society as it exists, the bourgeois is too much cottoned about for any zest in living; he sits in his parlour out of reach of any danger, often out of reach of any vicissitudes but one of health; and there he yawns. If the people in the next villa took pot-shots at him, he might be killed indeed, but so long as he escaped he would find his blood oxygenated and his views of the world brighter. If Mr. Mallock, on his way to the publishers, should have his skirts pinned to the wall by a javelin, it would not occur to him—at least for several hours—to ask if life were worth living; and if such peril were a daily matter, he would ask it nevermore; he would have other things to think about, he would be living indeed—not lying in a box with cotton, safe, but immeasurably dull. The aleatory, whether it touch life, or fortune, or renown—whether we explore Africa or only toss for halfpence—that is what I conceive men to love best, and that is what we are seeking to exclude from men's existences. Of all forms of the aleatory, that which most commonly attends our working-men—the danger of misery from want of work—is the least inspiriting: it does not whip the blood, it does not evoke the glory of contest; it is tragic, but it is passive; and yet, in so far as it is aleatory, and a peril sensibly touching them, it does truly season the men's lives. Of those who fail, I do not speak—despair should be sacred; but to those who even modestly succeed, the changes of their life bring interest: a job found, a shilling saved, a dainty earned, all these are wells of pleasure springing afresh for the successful poor; and it is not from these but from the villa-dweller that we hear complaints of the unworthiness of life. Much, then, as the average of the proletariat would gain in this new state of life, they would also lose a certain something, which would not be missed in the beginning, but would be missed progressively, and progressively lamented. Soon there would be a looking back: there would be tales of the old world humming in young men's ears, tales of the tramp and the pedlar, and the hopeful emigrant. And in the stall-fed life of the successful ant-heap—with its regular meals, regular duties, regular pleasures, an even course of life, and fear excluded—the vicissitudes, delights, and havens of to-day will seem of epic breadth. This may seem a shallow observation; but the springs by which men are moved lie much on the surface. Bread, I believe, has always been considered first, but the circus comes close upon its heels. Bread we suppose to be given amply; the cry for circuses will be the louder, and if the life of our descendants be such as we have conceived, there are two beloved pleasures on which they will be likely to fall back: the pleasures of intrigue and of sedition.

In all this I have supposed the ant-heap to be financially sound. I am no economist, only a writer of fiction; but even as such, I know one thing that bears on the economic question—I know the imperfection of man's faculty for business. The Anarchists, who count some rugged elements of common sense among what seem to me their tragic errors, have said upon this matter all that I could wish to say, and condemned beforehand great economical polities. So far it is obvious that they are right; they may be right also in predicting a period of communal independence, and they may even be right in thinking that desirable. But the rise of communes is none the less the end of economic equality, just when we were told it was beginning. Communes will not be all equal in extent, nor in quality of soil, nor in growth of population; nor will the surplus produce of all be equally marketable. It will be the old story of competing interests, only with a new unit; and, as it appears to me, a new, inevitable danger. For the merchant and the manufacturer, in this new world, will be a sovereign commune; it is a sovereign power that will see its crops undersold and its manufactures worsted in the market. And all the more dangerous that the sovereign power should be small. Great powers are slow to stir; national affronts, even with the aid of newspapers, filter slowly into popular consciousness; national losses are so unequally shared that one part of the population will be counting its gains while another sits by a cold hearth. But in the sovereign commune all will be centralised and sensitive. When jealousy springs up, when (let us say) the commune of Poole has overreached the commune of Dorchester, irritation will run like quicksilver throughout the body politic; each man in Dorchester will have to suffer directly in his diet and his dress; even the secretary, who drafts the official correspondence, will sit down to his task embittered, as a man who has dined ill and may expect to dine worse; and thus a business difference between communes will take on much the same colour as a dispute between diggers in the lawless West, and will lead as directly to the arbitrament of blows. So that the establishment of the communal system will not only reintroduce all the injustices and heartburnings of economic inequality, but will, in all human likelihood, inaugurate a world of hedge-row warfare. Dorchester will march on Poole, Sherborne on Dorchester, Wimborne on both ; the waggons will be fired on as they follow the highway, the trains wrecked on the lines, the ploughman will go armed into the field of tillage ; and if we have not a return of ballad literature, the local press at least will celebrate in a high vein the victory of Cerne Abbas or the reverse of Toller Porcorum. At least this will not be dull ; when I was younger, I could have welcomed such a world with relief ; but it is the New-Old with a vengeance, and irresistibly suggests the growth of military powers and the foundation of new empires.

AN APPEAL TO THE CLERGY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

WITH A NOTE FOR THE LAITY

> "Had I a strong voice, as it is the weakest alive, yea, could I lift it up as a trumpet, I would sound a retreat from our unnatural contentions, and irreligious strivings for religion."—ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON, 1669.

GENTLEMEN,—The position of the Church of Scotland is now one of considerable difficulty; not only the credit of the Church, not only the credit of Christianity, but to some extent also that of the national character, is at stake. You have just gained a great victory, in spite of an opposition neither very logical nor very generous; you have succeeded in effecting, by quiet constitutional processes, a great reform, which brings your Church somewhat nearer in character to what is required by your Dissenting brethren. It remains to be seen whether you can prove yourselves as generous as you have been wise and patient. And the position, as I say, is one of difficulty. Many, doubtless, left the Church for a reason which is now removed; many have joined other sects who would rather have joined themselves with you, had you been then as you now are; and for these you are bound to render as easy as may be the way of reconciliation, and show, by some notable action, the reality of your own desire for Peace. But I am not unaware that there are others, and those possibly a majority, who hold very different opinions—who regard the old quarrel as still competent, or have found some new reason for dissent; and from these the Church, if she makes such an advance as she ought to make, in all loyalty and charity, may chance to meet that most sensible of insults—ridicule, in return for an honest offer of reconciliation. I am not unaware, also, that there is yet another ground of difficulty; and that those even who would be most ready to hold the cause of offence as now removed will find it hard to forget the past—will continue to think themselves unjustly used—will not be willing to come back, as though they were repentant offenders, among those who delayed the reform and quietly enjoyed their benefices, while they bore the heat and burthen of the day in a voluntary exile for the Truth's sake.

In view of so many elements of difficulty, no intelligent person can be free from apprehension for the result; and you, gentlemen, may be perhaps more ready now to receive advice, to hear and weigh the opinion of one who is free, because he writes without name, than you would be at any juncture less critical. There is now a hope, at least, that some term may be put to our more clamorous dissensions. Those who are at all open to a feeling of national disgrace look eagerly forward to such a possibility; they have been witnesses already too long to the strife that has divided this small corner of Christendom; and they cannot remember without shame that there has been as much noise, as much recrimination, as much severance of friends, about mere logical abstractions in our remote island, as would have sufficed for the great dogmatic battles of the Continent. It would be difficult to exaggerate the pity that fills the heart at such a reflection; at the thought of how this neck of barren hills between two inclement seaways has echoed for three centuries with the uproar of sectarian battle; of how the east wind has carried out the sound of our shrill disputations into the desolate Atlantic, and the west wind has borne it over the German Ocean, as though it would make all Europe privy to how well we Scottish brethren abide together in unity. It is not a bright page in the annals of a small country: it is not a pleasant commentary on the Christianity that we profess; there is something in it pitiful, as I have said, for the pitiful man, but bitterly humorous for others. How much time we have lost, how much of the precious energy and patience of good men we have exhausted, on these trivial quarrels, it would be nauseous to consider ; we know too much already when we know the facts in block ; we know enough to make us hide our heads for shame, and grasp gladly at any present humiliation, if it would ensure a little more quiet, a little more charity, a little more brotherly love in the distant future.

And it is with this before your eyes that, as I feel certain, you are now addressing yourselves to the consideration of this important crisis. It is with a sense of the blackness of this discredit upon the national character and national Christianity that not you alone but many of other Churches are now setting themselves to square their future course with the exigencies of the new position of sects ; and it is with you that the responsibility remains. The obligation lies ever on the victor ; and just so surely as you have succeeded in the face of captious opposition in carrying forth the substance of a reform of which others had despaired, just as surely does it lie upon you as a duty to take such steps as shall make that reform available, not to you only, but to all your brethren who will consent to profit by it ; not only to all the clergy, but to the cause of decency and peace, throughout your native land. It is earnestly hoped that you may show yourselves worthy of a great opportunity, and do more for the public minds by the example of one act of generosity and humility than you could do by an infinite series of sermons.

Without doubt, it is your intention, on the earliest public opportunity, to make some advance. Without doubt, it is your purpose to improve the advantage you have gained, and to press upon those who quitted your communion some thirty years ago your great desire to be once more united to them. This, at least, will find a place in the most unfriendly programme you can entertain ; and if there are any in the Free Church (as I doubt not there are some) who seceded, not so much from any dislike to the just supremacy of the law, as from a belief that the law in these ecclesiastical matters was applied unjustly, I know well that you will be most eager to receive them back again; I know well that you will not let any petty vanity, any scruple of worldly dignity, stand between them and their honourable return. If, therefore, there were no more to be done than to display to these voluntary exiles the deep sense of your respect for their position, this appeal would be unnecessary, and you might be left to the guidance of your own good feeling.

But it seems to me that there is need of something more; it seems to me, and I think that it will seem to you also, that you must go even further if you would be equal to the importance of the situation. If there are any among the Dissenters whose consciences are so far satisfied with the provisions of the recent Act that they could now return to your communion, to such, it must not be forgotten, you stand in a position of great delicacy. The conduct of these men you have so far justified; you have tacitly admitted that there was some ground for dissatisfaction with the former condition of the Church; and though you may still judge those to have been over-scrupulous who were moved by this imperfection to secede, instead of waiting patiently with you until it could be remedied by peaceful means, you must not forget that it is the strong stomach, according to Saint Paul, that is to consider the weak, and should come forward to meet these brethren with something better than compliments upon your lips. Observe, I speak only of those who would now see their way back to your communion with a clear conscience; it is their conduct, and their conduct alone, that you have justified, and therefore it is only for them that your special generosity is here solicited. But towards them, if there are any such, your countrymen would desire to see you behave with all consideration. I do not pretend to lay before you any definite scheme of action; I wish only to let you understand what thoughts are busy in the heads of some outside your councils, so that you may take this also into consideration when you come to decide. And this, roughly, is how it appears to these: These good men have exposed themselves to the chance of hardship for the sake of their scruples, whilst you, being of a stronger stomach, continued to enjoy the security of national endowments. Some of you occupy the very livings which they resigned for conscience sake. To others preferment has fallen which would have fallen to them had they been still eligible. If, then, any of them are now content to return, you are bound, if not in justice, then in honour, to do all that you can to testify your respect for brave conviction, and to repair to them such losses as they may have suffered, whether for their first secession or their second. You owe a special duty, not only to the courage that left the Church, but to the wisdom and moderation that now returns to it. And your sense of this duty will find a vent not only in word but in action. You will facilitate their return not only by considerate and brotherly language, but by pecuniary aid ; you will seek, by some new endowment scheme, to preserve for them their ecclesiastical status. That they have no claim will be their strongest claim on your consideration. Many of you, if not all, will set apart some share out of your slender livings for their assistance and support ; you will give them what you can afford ; and you will say to them, as you do so, what I dare say to you, that what you give is theirs—not only in honour but in justice.

For you know that the justice which should rule the dealings of Christians, how much more of Christian ministers, is not as the justice of courts of law or equity ; and those who profess the morality of Jesus Christ have abjured, in that profession, all that can be urged by policy or worldly prudence. From them we can accept no half-hearted and calculating generosity ; they must make haste to be liberal ; they must catch with eagerness at all opportunities of service, and the mere whisper of an obligation should be to them more potent than the decree of a court to others who make profession of a less stringent code. And remember that it lies with you to show to the world that Christianity is something more than a verbal system. In the lapse of generations men grow weary of unsupported precept. They may wait long, and keep long in memory the bright doings of former days, but they will weary at the last; they will begin to trouble you for your credentials; if you cannot give them miracles, they will demand virtue; if you cannot heal the sick, they will call upon you for some practice of the Christian ethics. Thus people will knock often at a door if only it be opened to them now and again; but if the door remains closed too long, they will judge the house uninhabited and go elsewhere. And thus it is that a season of persecution, constantly endured, revives the fainting confidence of the people, and some centuries of prosperity may prepare a Church for ruin. You have here at your hand an opportunity to do more for the credit of your Christianity than ever you could do by visions, miracles, or prophecies. A sacrifice such as this would be better worth, as I said before, than many sermons; and there is a disposition in mankind that would ennoble it beyond much that is more ostentatious; for men, whether lay or clerical, suffer better the flame of the stake than a daily inconvenience or a pointed sneer, and will not readily be martyred without some external circumstance and a concourse looking on. And you need not fear that your virtue will be thrown away; the people of Scotland will be quick to understand, in default of visible fire and halter, that you have done a brave action for Christianity and the national weal; and if they are spared in the future any of the present ignoble jealousy of sect against sect, they will not forget that to that end you gave of your household comfort and stinted your children. Even if you fail—ay, and even if there were not found one to profit by your invitation—your virtue would still have its own reward. Your predecessors gave their lives for ends not always the most Christian; they were tempted, and slain with the sword; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, in caves and in dens of the earth. But your action will not be less illustrious; what you may have to suffer may be a small thing if the world will, but it will have been suffered for the cause of peace and brotherly love.

I have said that the people of Scotland will be quick to appreciate what you do. You know well that they will be quick also to follow your example. But the sign should come from you. It is more seemly that you should lead than follow in this matter. Your predecessors gave the word from their free pulpits which was to brace men for sectarian strife: it would be a pleasant sequel if the word came from you that was to bid them bury all jealousy, and forget the ugly and contentious past in a good hope of peace to come.

What is said in these few pages may be objected to as vague; it is no more vague than the position seemed to me to demand. Each man must judge for himself what it behoves him to do at this juncture, and the whole Church for herself. All that is intended in this appeal is to begin, in a tone of dignity and disinterestedness, the consideration of the question; for when such matters are much pulled about in public prints, and have been often discussed from many different, and not always from very high, points of view, there is ever a tendency that the decision of the parties may contract some taint of meanness from the spirit of their critics. All that is desired is to press upon you, as ministers of the Church of Scotland, some sense of the high expectation with which your country looks to you at this time; and how many reasons there are that you should show an example of signal disinterestedness and zeal in the encouragement that you give to returning brethren. For, first, it lies with you to clear the Church from the discredit of our miserable contentions; and surely you can never have a fairer opportunity to improve her claim to the style of a peacemaker. Again, it lies with you, as I have said, to take the first step, and prove your own true ardour for an honourable union; and how else are you to prove it? It lies with you, moreover, to justify in the eyes of the world the time you have been enjoying your benefices, while these others have voluntarily shut themselves out from all participation in their convenience; and how else are you to convince the world that there was not something of selfishness in your motives? It lies with you, lastly, to keep your example unspotted before your congregations; and I do not know how better you are to do that.

It is never a thankful office to offer advice; and advice is the more unpalatable, not only from the difficulty of the service recommended, but often from its very obviousness. We are fired with anger against those who make themselves the spokesmen of plain obligations; for they seem to insult us as they advise. In the present case I should have feared to waken some such feeling, had it not been that I was addressing myself to a body of special men on a very special occasion. I know too much of the history of ideas to imagine that the sentiments advocated in this appeal are peculiar to me and a few others. I am confident that your own minds are already busy with similar reflections. But I know at the same time how difficult it is for one man to speak to another in such a matter; how he is withheld by all manner of personal considerations, and dare not propose what he has nearest his heart, because the other has a larger family or a smaller stipend, or is older, more venerable, and more conscientious than himself; and it is in view of this that I have determined to profit by the freedom of an anonymous writer, and give utterance to what many of you would have uttered already, had they been (as I am) apart from the battle. It is easy to be virtuous when one's own convenience is not affected; and it is no shame to any man to follow the advice of an outsider who owns that, while he sees which is the better part, he might not have the courage to profit himself by his opinion.

[NOTE FOR THE LAITY]

The foregoing pages have been in type since the beginning of last September. I have been advised to give them to the public; and it is only necessary to add that nothing of all that has taken place since they were written has made me modify an opinion or so much as change a word. The question is not one that can be altered by circumstances.

I need not tell the laity that with them this matter ultimately rests. Whether we regard it as a question of mere expense or as a question of good feeling against ill feeling, the solution must come from the Church members. The lay purse is the long one ; and if the lay opinion does not speak from so high a place, it speaks all the week through and with innumerable voices. Trumpets and captains are all very well in their way ; but if the trumpets were ever so clear, and the captains as bold as lions, it is still the army that must take the fort.

The laymen of the Church have here a question before them, on the answering of which, as I still think, many others attend. If the Established Church could throw off its lethargy, and give the Dissenters some speaking token of its zeal for union, I still think that union, to some extent, would be the result. There is a motion tabled (as I suppose all know) for the next meeting of the General Assembly ; but something more than motions must be tabled, and something more must be given than votes. It lies practically with the laymen, by a new endowment scheme, to put the Church right with the world in two ways so that those who left it more than thirty years ago, and who may now be willing to return, shall lose neither in money nor in ecclesiastical status. At the outside, what will they have to do ? They will have to do for (say) ten years what the laymen of the Free Church have done cheerfully ever since 1843.

February 12, 1875.

EDINBURGH:
PICTURESQUE NOTES

AMAR SINGH COLLEGE
Acc. No:
SRINAGAR.

This work consists of a series of contributions which originally appeared in *The Portfolio*, running from June to December 1878. It was published as a book in 1879, with etchings by A. Brunet-Debaines, a distinguished French artist who was then living in England.

"'T is a kind of book nobody would ever care to read; but none of the young men could have done it better than I have, which is always a consideration," wrote Stevenson to his mother in September 1878.

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EDINBURGH: PICTURESQUE NOTES

I

INTRODUCTORY

THE ancient and famous metropolis of the North sits overlooking a windy estuary from the slope and summit of three hills. No situation could be more commanding for the head city of a kingdom; none better chosen for noble prospects. From her tall precipice and terraced gardens she looks far and wide on the sea and broad champaigns. To the east you may catch at sunset the spark of the May lighthouse, where the Firth expands into the German Ocean; and away to the west, over all the carse of Stirling, you can see the first snows upon Ben Ledi.

But Edinburgh pays cruelly for her high seat in one of the vilest climates under heaven. She is liable to be beaten upon by all the winds that blow, to be drenched with rain, to be buried in cold sea fogs out of the east, and powdered with the snow as it comes flying southward from the Highland hills. The weather is raw and boisterous in winter, shifty and ungenial in summer, and a downright meteorological purgatory in the spring. The delicate die early, and I, as a survivor, among bleak winds and plumping rain, have been sometimes tempted to envy them their fate. For all who love shelter and the blessings of the sun, who hate dark weather and perpetual tilting against squalls, there could scarcely be found a more unhomely and harassing place of residence. Many such aspire angrily after that Somewhere-else of the imagination, where all troubles are supposed to end. They lean over the great bridge which joins the New Town with the Old—that windiest spot, or high altar, in this northern temple of the winds—and watch the trains smoking out from under them and vanishing into the tunnel on a voyage to brighter skies. Happy the passengers who shake off the dust of Edinburgh, and have heard for the last time the cry of the east wind among her chimney-tops! And yet the place establishes an interest in people's hearts; go where they will, they find no city of the same distinction; go where they will, they take a pride in their old home.

Venice, it has been said, differs from all other cities in the sentiment which she inspires. The rest may have admirers; she only, a famous fair one, counts lovers in her train. And indeed, even by her kindest friends, Edinburgh is not considered in a similar sense. These like her for many reasons, not any one of which is satisfactory in itself. They like her whimsically, if you will, and somewhat as a virtuoso dotes upon his cabinet. Her attraction is romantic in the narrowest meaning of the term. Beautiful as she is, she is not so much beautiful as interesting. She is pre-eminently Gothic, and all the more so since she has set herself off with some Greek airs, and erected classic temples on her crags. In a word, and above all, she is a curiosity.

The Palace of Holyrood has been left aside in the growth of Edinburgh; and stands grey and silent in a workman's quarter and among breweries and gas works. It is a house of many memories. Great people of yore, kings and queens, buffoons and grave ambassadors, played their stately farce for centuries in Holyrood. Wars have been plotted, dancing has lasted deep into the night, murder has been done in its chambers. There Prince Charlie held his phantom levées, and in a very gallant manner represented a fallen dynasty for some hours. Now, all these things of clay are mingled with the dust, the king's crown itself is shown for sixpence to the vulgar; but the stone palace has outlived these changes.

For fifty weeks together, it is no more than a show for tourists and a museum of old furniture; but on the fifty-first, behold the palace re-awakened and mimicking its past.

The Lord Commissioner, a kind of stage sovereign, sits among stage courtiers; a coach and six and clattering escort come and go before the gate; at night, the windows are lighted up, and its near neighbours, the workmen, may dance in their own houses to the palace music. And in this the palace is typical. There is a spark among the embers; from time to time the old volcano smokes. Edinburgh has but partly abdicated, and still wears, in parody, her metropolitan trappings. Half a capital and half a country town, the whole city leads a double existence; it has long trances of the one and flashes of the other; like the king of the Black Isles, it is half-alive and half a monumental marble. There are armed men and cannon in the citadel overhead; you may see the troops marshalled on the high parade; and at night after the early winter evenfall, and in the morning before the laggard winter dawn, the wind carries abroad over Edinburgh the sound of drums and bugles. Grave judges sit bewigged in what was once the scene of imperial deliberations.

Close by in the High Street perhaps the trumpets may sound about the stroke of noon; and you see a troop of citizens in tawdry masquerade; tabard above, heather-mixture trouser below, and the men themselves trudging in the mud among unsympathetic bystanders. The grooms of a well-appointed circus tread the streets with a better presence. And yet these are the Heralds and Pursuivants of Scotland, who are about to proclaim a new law of the United Kingdom before two score boys, and thieves, and hackney-coachmen. Meanwhile every hour the bell of the University rings out over the hum of the streets, and every hour a double tide of students, coming and going, fills the deep archways.

And lastly, one night in the spring-time—or say one morning rather, at the peep of day—late folk may hear the voices of many men singing a psalm in unison from a church on one side of the old High Street; and a little after, or perhaps a little before, the sound of many men singing a psalm in unison from another church on the opposite side of the way. There will be something in the words about the dew of Hermon and how goodly it is to see brethren dwelling together in unity. And the late folk will tell themselves that all this singing denotes the conclusion of two yearly ecclesiastical parliaments—the parliaments of Churches which are brothers in many admirable virtues, but not specially like brothers in this particular of a tolerant and peaceful life.

Again, meditative people will find a charm in a certain consonancy between the aspect of the city and its odd and stirring history. Few places, if any, offer a more barbaric display of contrasts to the eye. In the very midst stands one of the most satisfactory crags in nature—a Bass Rock upon dry land rooted in a garden, shaken by passing trains, carrying a crown of battlements and turrets, and describing its warlike shadow over the liveliest and brightest thoroughfare of the new town. From their smoky beehives, ten stories high, the unwashed look down upon the open squares and gardens of the wealthy; and gay people sunning themselves along Princes Street, with its mile of commercial palaces all beflagged upon some great occasion, see, across a gardened valley set with statues, where the washings of the old town flutter in the breeze at its high windows. And then, upon all sides, what a clashing of architecture! In this one valley, where the life of the town goes most busily forward, there may be seen, shown one above and behind another by the accidents of the ground, buildings in almost every style upon the globe. Egyptian and Greek temples, Venetian palaces and Gothic spires, are huddled one over another in a most admired disorder; while, above all, the brute mass of the Castle and the summit of Arthur's Seat look down upon these imitations with a becoming dignity, as the works of Nature may look down upon the monuments of Art. But Nature is a more indiscriminate patroness than we imagine, and in no way frightened of a strong effect.

The birds roost as willingly among the Corinthian capitals as in the crannies of the crag; the same atmosphere and daylight clothe the eternal rock and yesterday's imitation portico; and as the soft northern sunshine throws out everything into a glorified distinctness—or easterly mists, coming up with the blue evening, fuse all these incongruous features into one, and the lamps begin to glitter along the street, and faint lights to burn in the high windows across the valley—the feeling grows upon you that this also is a piece of nature in the most intimate sense; that this profusion of eccentricities, this dream in masonry and living rock is not a drop-scene in a theatre, but a city in the world of everyday reality, connected by railway and telegraph-wire with all the capitals of Europe, and inhabited by citizens of the familiar type, who keep ledgers, and attend church, and have sold their immortal portion to a daily paper. By all the canons of romance, the place demands to be half-deserted and leaning towards decay; birds we might admit in profusion, the play of the sun and winds, and a few gypsies encamped in the chief thoroughfare; but these citizens, with their cabs and tramways, their trains and posters, are altogether out of key. Chartered tourists, they make free with historic localities, and rear their young among the most picturesque sites with a grand human indifference. To see them thronging by, in their neat clothes and conscious moral rectitude, and with a little air of possession that verges on the absurd, is not the least striking feature of the place.*

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* These sentences have, I hear, given offence in my native town, and a proportionable pleasure to our rivals of Glasgow. I confess the news caused me both pain and merriment. May I remark, as a balm for wounded fellow-townsmen, that there is nothing deadly in my accusations? Small blame to them if they keep ledgers: 'tis an excellent business habit. Church-going is not, that ever I heard, a subject of reproach; decency of linen is a mark of prosperous affairs, and conscious moral rectitude one of the tokens of good living. It is not their fault if the city calls for something more specious by way of inhabitants. A man in a frock-coat looks out of place upon an Alp or Pyramid, although he has the virtues of a Peabody and the talents of a Bentham. And let them console themselves—they do as well as

And the story of the town is as eccentric as its appearance. For centuries it was a capital thatched with heather, and more than once, in the evil days of English invasion, it has gone up in flame to heaven, a beacon to ships at sea. It was the jousting-ground of jealous nobles, not only on Greenside or by the King's Stables, where set tournaments were fought to the sound of trumpets and under the authority of the royal presence, but in every alley where there was room to cross swords, and in the main street, where popular tumult under the Blue Blanket alternated with the brawls of outlandish clansmen and retainers. Down in the palace John Knox reproved his queen in the accents of modern democracy. In the town, in one of those little shops plastered like so many swallows' nests among the buttresses of the old Cathedral, that familiar autocrat, James VI., would gladly share a bottle of wine with George Heriot the goldsmith. Up on the Pentland Hills, that so quietly look down on the Castle with the city lying in waves around it, those mad and dismal fanatics, the Sweet Singers, haggard from long exposure on the moors, sat day and night with " tearful psalms " to see Edinburgh consumed with fire from heaven, like another Sodom or Gomorrah. There, in the Grassmarket, stiff-necked, covenanting heroes offered up the often unnecessary, but not less honourable, sacrifice of their lives, and bade eloquent farewell to sun, moon, and stars, and earthly friendships, or died silent to the roll of drums. Down by yon outlet rode Grahame of Claverhouse and his thirty dragoons, with the town beating to arms behind their horses' tails—a sorry handful thus riding for their lives, but with a man at the head who was to return in a different temper, make a dash that staggered Scotland to the heart, and die happily in the thick of fight. There Aikenhead was hanged for a piece of boyish incredulity ; there, a few years afterwards, David Hume ruined Philosophy and Faith, an undisturbed

anybody else ; the population of (let us say) Chicago would cut quite as rueful a figure on the same romantic stage. To the Glasgow people I would say only one word, but that is of gold : *I have not yet written a book about Glasgow.*

and well-reputed citizen; and thither, in yet a few years more, Burns came from the plough-tail, as to an academy of gilt unbelief and artificial letters. There, when the great exodus was made across the valley, and the new town began to spread abroad its draughty parallelograms and rear its long frontage on the opposing hill, there was such a flitting, such a change of domicile and dweller, as was never excelled in the history of cities: the cobbler succeeded the earl; the beggar ensconced himself by the judge's chimney; what had been a palace was used as a pauper refuge; and great mansions were so parcelled out among the least and lowest in society, that the hearthstone of the old proprietor was thought large enough to be partitioned off into a bedroom by the new.

II

OLD TOWN: THE LANDS

THE Old Town, it is pretended, is the chief characteristic, and, from a picturesque point of view, the liver-wing of Edinburgh. It is one of the most common forms of depreciation to throw cold water on the whole by adroit over-commendation of a part, since everything worth judging, whether it be a man, a work of art, or only a fine city, must be judged upon its merits as a whole. The Old Town depends for much of its effect on the new quarters that lie around it, on the sufficiency of its situation, and on the hills that back it up. If you were to set it somewhere else by itself, it would look remarkedly like Stirling in a bolder and loftier edition. The point is to see this embellished Stirling planted in the midst of a large, active, and fantastic modern city; for there the two react in a picturesque sense, and the one is the making of the other.

The Old Town occupies a sloping ridge or tail of diluvial matter, protected, in some subsidence of the waters, by the Castle cliffs which fortify it to the west. On the one side of it and the other the new towns of the south and of the north occupy their lower, broader, and more gentle hill-tops. Thus, the quarter of the Castle overtops the whole city and keeps an open view to sea and land. It dominates for miles on every side; and people on the decks of ships, or ploughing in quiet country places over in Fife, can see the banner on the Castle battlements, and the smoke of the Old Town blowing abroad over the subjacent country. A city that is set upon a hill. It was, I suppose, from this distant aspect that she got her nickname of *Auld Reekie*.

Perhaps it was given her by people who had never crossed her doors: day after day, from their various rustic Pisgahs, they had seen the pile of building on the hill-top, and the long plume of smoke over the plain; so it appeared to them; so it had appeared to their fathers tilling the same field; and as that was all they knew of the place, it could be all expressed in these two words.

Indeed, even on a nearer view, the Old Town is properly smoked; and though it is well washed with rain all the year round, it has a grim and sooty aspect among its younger suburbs. It grew, under the law that regulates the growth of walled cities in precarious situations, not in extent, but in height and density. Public buildings were forced, wherever there was room for them, into the midst of thoroughfares; thoroughfares were diminished into lanes; houses sprang up story after story, neighbour mounting upon neighbour's shoulder, as in some Black Hole of Calcutta, until the population slept fourteen or fifteen deep in a vertical direction. The tallest of these *lands*, as they are locally termed, have long since been burnt out; but to this day it is not uncommon to see eight or ten windows at a flight; and the cliff of building which hangs imminent over Waverley Bridge would still put many natural precipices to shame. The cellars are already high above the gazer's head, planted on the steep hillside; as for the garret, all the furniture may be in the pawnshop, but it commands a famous prospect to the Highland hills. The poor man may roost up there in the centre of Edinburgh, and yet have a peep of the green country from his window; he shall see the quarters of the well-to-do fathoms underneath, with their broad squares and gardens; he shall have nothing overhead but a few spires, the stone top-gallants of the city; and perhaps the wind may reach him with a rustic pureness, and bring a smack of the sea, or of flowering lilacs in the spring.

It is almost the correct literary sentiment to deplore the revolutionary improvements of Mr. Chambers and his following. It is easy to be a conservator of the discomforts of others; indeed, it is only our good qualities we find it irksome to conserve. Assuredly, in driving streets through the black labyrinth, a few curious old corners have been swept away, and some associations turned out of house and home. But what slices of sunlight, what breaths of clean air, have been let in! And what a picturesque world remains untouched! You go under dark arches, and down dark stairs and alleys. The way is so narrow that you can lay a hand on either wall; so steep that, in greasy winter weather, the pavement is almost as treacherous as ice. Washing dangles above washing from the windows; the houses bulge outwards upon flimsy brackets; you see a bit of sculpture in a dark corner; at the top of all, a gable and a few crowsteps are printed on the sky. Here, you come into a court where the children are at play and the grown people sit upon their doorsteps, and perhaps a church spire shows itself above the roofs. Here, in the narrowest of the entry, you find a great old mansion still erect, with some insignia of its former state—some scutcheon, some holy or courageous motto, on the lintel. The local antiquary points out where famous and well-born people had their lodging; and as you look up, out pops the head of a slatternly woman from the countess's window. The Bedouins camp within Pharaoh's palace walls, and the old war-ship is given over to the rats. We are already a far way from the days when powdered heads were plentiful in these alleys, with jolly, port-wine faces underneath. Even in the chief thoroughfares Irish washings flutter at the windows, and the pavements are encumbered with loiterers.

These loiterers are a true character of the scene. Some shrewd Scottish workmen may have paused on their way to a job, debating Church affairs and politics with their tools upon their arm. But the most part are of a different order—skulking jail-birds; unkempt, bare-foot children; big-mouthed, robust women, in a sort of uniform of striped flannel petticoat and short tartan shawl; among these, a few supervising constables and a dismal sprinkling of mutineers and broken men from higher ranks in society, with some mark of better days upon them, like a brand.

In a place no larger than Edinburgh, and where the traffic is mostly centred in five or six chief streets, the same face comes often under the notice of an idle stroller. In fact, from this point of view, Edinburgh is not so much a small city as the largest of small towns. It is scarce possible to avoid observing your neighbours; and I never yet heard of anyone who tried. It has been my fortune, in this anonymous accidental way, to watch more than one of these downward travellers for some stages on the road to ruin. One man must have been upwards of sixty before I first observed him, and he made then a decent, personable figure in broadcloth of the best. For three years he kept falling—grease coming and buttons going from the square-skirted coat, the face puffing and pimpling, the shoulders growing bowed, the hair falling scant and grey upon his head; and the last that ever I saw of him, he was standing at the mouth of an entry with several men in moleskin, three parts drunk, and his old black raiment daubed with mud. I fancy that I still can hear him laugh. There was something heart-breaking in this gradual declension at so advanced an age; you would have thought a man of sixty out of the reach of these calamities; you would have thought that he was niched by that time into a safe place in life, whence he could pass quietly and honourably into the grave.

One of the earliest marks of these *dégringolades* is, that the victim begins to disappear from the New Town thoroughfares, and takes to the High Street, like a wounded animal to the woods. And such an one is the type of the quarter. It also has fallen socially. A scutcheon over the door somewhat jars in sentiment where there is a washing at every window. The old man, when I saw him last, wore the coat in which he had played the gentleman three years before; and that was just what gave him so pre-eminent an air of wretchedness.

It is true that the over-population was at least as dense in the epoch of lords and ladies, and that nowadays some customs which made Edinburgh notorious of yore have been fortunately pretermitted. But an aggregation of comfort is not distasteful like an aggregation of the reverse. Nobody cares how many lords and ladies, and divines and lawyers, may have been crowded into these houses in the past—perhaps the more the merrier. The glasses clink around the china punch-bowl, some one touches the virginals, there are peacocks' feathers on the chimney, and the tapers burn clear and pale in the red fire-light. That is not an ugly picture in itself, nor will it become ugly upon repetition. All the better if the like were going on in every second room; the *land* would only look the more inviting. Times are changed. In one house, perhaps, two score families herd together; and, perhaps, not one of them is wholly out of the reach of want. The great hotel is given over to discomfort from the foundation to the chimney-tops; everywhere a pinching, narrow habit, scanty meals, and an air of sluttishness and dirt. In the first room there is a birth, in another a death, in a third a sordid drinking-bout, and the detective and the Bible-reader cross upon the stairs. High words are audible from dwelling to dwelling, and children have a strange experience from the first; only a robust soul, you would think, could grow up in such conditions without hurt. And even if God tempers his dispensations to the young, and all the ill does not arise that our apprehensions may forecast, the sight of such a way of living is disquieting to people who are more happily circumstanced. Social inequality is nowhere more ostentatious than at Edinburgh. I have mentioned already how, to the stroller along Princes Street, the High Street callously exhibits its back garrets. It is true there is a garden between. And although nothing could be more glaring by way of contrast, sometimes the opposition is more immediate; sometimes the thing lies in a nutshell, and there is not so much as a blade of grass between the rich and poor. To look over the South Bridge and see the Cowgate below full of crying hawkers, is to view one rank of society from another in the twinkling of an eye.

One night I went along the Cowgate after every one was abed but the policeman, and stopped by hazard before a tall *land*. The moon touched upon its chimneys and shone blankly on the upper windows; there was no light anywhere in the great bulk of building; but as I stood there it seemed to me that I could hear quite a body of quiet sounds from the interior; doubtless there were many clocks ticking, and people snoring on their backs. And thus, as I fancied, the dense life within made itself faintly audible in my ears, family after family contributing its quota to the general hum, and the whole pile beating in tune to its timepieces, like a great disordered heart. Perhaps it was little more than a fancy altogether, but it was strangely impressive at the time, and gave me an imaginative measure of the disproportion between the quantity of living flesh and the trifling walls that separated and contained it.

There was nothing fanciful, at least, but every circumstance of terror and reality, in the fall of the *land* in the High Street. The building had grown rotten to the core; the entry underneath had suddenly closed up so that the scavenger's barrow could not pass; cracks and reverberations sounded through the house at night; the inhabitants of the huge old human bee-hive discussed their peril when they encountered on the stair; some had even left their dwellings in a panic of fear, and returned to them again in a fit of economy or self-respect; when, in the black hours of a Sunday morning, the whole structure ran together with a hideous uproar and tumbled story upon story to the ground. The physical shock was felt far and near; and the moral shock travelled with the morning milkmaid into all the suburbs. The church-bells never sounded more dismally over Edinburgh than that grey forenoon. Death had made a brave harvest; and, like Samson, by pulling down one roof destroyed many a home. None who saw it can have forgotten the aspect of the gable: here it was plastered, there papered, according to the rooms; here the kettle still stood on the hob, high overhead; and there a cheap picture of the Queen was pasted over the chimney. So, by this disaster, you had a glimpse into the life of thirty families, all suddenly cut off from the revolving years. The *land* had fallen;

and with the *land* how much! Far in the country, people saw a gap in the city ranks, and the sun looked through between the chimneys in an unwonted place. And all over the world, in London, in Canada, in New Zealand, fancy what a multitude of people could exclaim with truth: "The house that I was born in fell last night!"

III

THE PARLIAMENT CLOSE

TIME has wrought its changes most notably around the precinct of St. Giles's Church. The church itself, if it were not for the spire, would be unrecognisable; the *Krames* are all gone, not a shop is left to shelter in its buttresses; and zealous magistrates and a misguided architect have shorn the design of manhood, and left it poor, naked, and pitifully pretentious. As St. Giles's must have had in former days a rich and quaint appearance now forgotten, so the neighbourhood was bustling, sunless, and romantic. It was here that the town was most overbuilt; but the overbuilding has been all rooted out, and not only a free fairway left along the High Street with an open space on either side of the church, but a great porthole, knocked in the main line of the *lands*, gives an outlook to the north and the New Town.

There is a silly story of a subterranean passage between the Castle and Holyrood, and a bold Highland piper who volunteered to explore its windings. He made his entrance by the upper end, playing a strathspey; the curious footed it after him down the street, following his descent by the sound of the chanter from below; until all of a sudden, about the level of St. Giles's, the music came abruptly to an end, and the people in the street stood at fault with hands uplifted. Whether he was choked with gases, or perished in a quag, or was removed bodily by the Evil One, remains a point of doubt; but the piper has never again been seen or heard of from that day to this. Perhaps he wandered down into the land of Thomas the Rhymer, and some day, when it is least expected, may take a thought to revisit the sunlit upper world. That will be a strange moment for the cabmen on the stance beside St. Giles's, when they hear the drone of his pipes reascending from the bowels of the earth below their horses' feet.

But it is not only pipers who have vanished, many a solid bulk of masonry has been likewise spirited into the air. Here, for example, is the shape of a heart let into the causeway. This was the site of the Tolbooth, the Heart of Midlothian, a place old in story and name-father to a noble book. The walls are now down in the dust; there is no more *squalor carceris* for merry debtors, no more cage for the old acknowledged prison-breaker; but the sun and the wind play freely over the foundations of the jail. Nor is this the only memorial that the pavement keeps of former days. The ancient burying-ground of Edinburgh lay behind St. Giles's Church, running downhill to the Cowgate and covering the site of the present Parliament House. It has disappeared as utterly as the prison or the Luckenbooths; and for those ignorant of its history, I know only one token that remains. In the Parliament Close, trodden daily underfoot by advocates, two letters and a date mark the resting-place of the man who made Scotland over again in his own image, the indefatigable, undissuadable John Knox. He sleeps within call of the church that so often echoed to his preaching.

Hard by the reformer, a bandy-legged and garlanded Charles Second, made of lead, bestrides a tun-bellied charger. The King has his back turned, and, as you look, seems to be trotting clumsily away from such a dangerous neighbour. Often, for hours together, these two will be alone in the Close, for it lies out of the way of all but legal traffic. On one side the south wall of the church, on the other the arcades of the Parliament House, enclose this irregular bight of causeway and describe their shadows on it in the sun. At either end, from round St. Giles's buttresses, you command a look into the High Street with its motley passengers; but the stream goes by, east and west, and leaves the Parliament Close to Charles the Second and the birds. Once in a while, a patient crowd may be seen loitering there all day, some eating fruit, some reading a newspaper; and to judge by their quiet demeanour, you would think they were waiting for a distribution of soup-tickets. The fact is far otherwise; within in the Justiciary Court a man is upon trial for his life, and these are some of the curious for whom the gallery was found too narrow. Towards afternoon, if the prisoner is unpopular, there will be a round of hisses when he is brought forth. Once in a while, too, an advocate in wig and gown, hand upon mouth, full of pregnant nods, sweeps to and fro in the arcade listening to an agent; and at certain regular hours a whole tide of lawyers hurries across the space.

The Parliament Close has been the scene of marking incidents in Scottish history. Thus, when the Bishops were ejected from the Convention in 1688, "all fourteen of them gathered together with pale faces and stood in a cloud in the Parliament Close": poor episcopal personages who were done with fair weather for life! Some of the west-country Societarians standing by, who would have "rejoiced more than in great sums" to be at their hanging, hustled them so rudely that they knocked their heads together. It was not magnanimous behaviour to dethroned enemies; but one, at least, of the Societarians had groaned in the *boots*, and they had all seen their dear friends upon the scaffold. Again, at the "woeful Union," it was here that people crowded to escort their favourite from the last of Scottish parliaments: people flushed with nationality, as Boswell would have said, ready for riotous acts, and fresh from throwing stones at the author of *Robinson Crusoe* as he looked out of window.

One of the pious in the seventeenth century, going to pass his trials (examinations as we now say) for the Scottish Bar, beheld the Parliament Close open and had a vision of the mouth of Hell. This, and small wonder, was the means of his conversion. Nor was the vision unsuitable to the locality; for after an hospital, what uglier piece is there in civilisation than a court of law? Hither come envy, malice, and all uncharitableness to wrestle it out in public

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tourney; crimes, broken fortunes, severed households, the knave and his victim, gravitate to this low building with the arcade. To how many has not St. Giles's bell told the first hour after ruin? I think I see them pause to count the strokes, and wander on again into the moving High Street, stunned and sick at heart. ✓4.2.

A pair of swing-doors gives admittance to a hall with a carved roof, hung with legal portraits, adorned with legal statuary, lighted by windows of painted glass, and warmed by three vast fires. This is the *Salle des pas perdus* of the Scottish Bar. Here, by a ferocious custom, idle youths must promenade from ten till two. From end to end, singly or in pairs or trios, the gowns and wigs go back and forward. Through a hum of talk and footfalls, the piping tones of a Macer announce a fresh cause and call upon the names of those concerned. Intelligent men have been walking here daily for ten or twenty years without a rag of business or a shilling of reward. In process of time, they may perhaps be made the Sheriff-Substitute and Fountain of Justice at Lerwick or Tobermory. There is nothing required, you would say, but a little patience and a taste for exercise and bad air. To breathe dust and bombazine, to feed the mind on cackling gossip, to hear three parts of a case and drink a glass of sherry, to long with indescribable longings for the hour when a man may slip out of his travesty and devote himself to golf for the rest of the afternoon, and to do this day by day and year after year, may seem so small a thing to the inexperienced! But those who have made the experiment are of a different way of thinking, and count it the most arduous form of idleness.

More swing-doors open into pigeon-holes where Judges of the First Appeal sit singly, and halls of audience where the supreme Lords sit by three or four. Here, you may see Scott's place within the bar, where he wrote many a page of Waverley novels to the drone of judicial proceeding. You will hear a good deal of shrewdness, and, as their Lordships do not altogether disdain pleasantry, a fair proportion of dry fun. The broadest of broad Scots is now banished from the bench; but the courts still retain a certain national flavour. We have a solemn enjoyable way of lingering on a case. We treat law as a fine art, and relish and digest a good distinction. There is no hurry: point after point must be rightly examined and reduced to principle; judge after judge must utter forth his *obiter dicta* to delighted brethren.

Besides the courts, there are installed under the same roof no less than three libraries: two of no mean order; confused and semi-subterranean, full of stairs and galleries; where you may see the most studious-looking wigs fishing out novels by lanthorn light, in the very place where the old Privy Council tortured Covenanters. As the Parliament House is built upon a slope, although it presents only one story to the north, it measures half a dozen at least upon the south; and range after range of vaults extend below the libraries. Few places are more characteristic of this hilly capital. You descend one stone stair after another, and wander, by the flicker of a match, in a labyrinth of stone cellars. Now, you pass below the Outer Hall and hear overhead, brisk but ghostly, the interminable pattering of legal feet. Now, you come upon a strong door with a wicket: on the other side are the cells of the police office and the trap-stair that gives admittance to the dock in the Justiciary Court. Many a foot that has gone up there lightly enough, has been dead-heavy in the descent. Many a man's life has been argued away from him during long hours in the court above. But just now that tragic stage is empty and silent like a church on a week-day, with the bench all sheeted up and nothing moving but the sunbeams on the wall. A little farther and you strike upon a room, not empty like the rest, but crowded with *productions* from bygone criminal cases; a grim lumber: lethal weapons, poisoned organs in a jar, a door with a shot hole through the panel, behind which a man fell dead. I cannot fancy why they should preserve them, unless it were against the Judgment Day. At length, as you continue to descend, you see a peep of yellow gaslight and hear a jostling, whispering noise ahead; next moment you turn a corner, and there, in a whitewashed passage, is a machinery belt industriously turning on its wheels. You would think the engine had grown there of its own accord, like a cellar fungus, and would soon spin itself out and fill the vaults from end to end with its mysterious labours. In truth, it is only some gear of the steam ventilator; and you will find the engineers at hand, and may step out of their door into the sunlight. For all this while, you have not been descending towards the earth's centre, but only to the bottom of the hill and the foundations of the Parliament House; low down, to be sure, but still under the open heaven and in a field of grass. The daylight shines garishly on the back windows of the Irish quarter; on broken shutters, wry gables, old palsied houses on the brink of ruin, a crumbling human pigsty fit for human pigs. There are few signs of life, besides a scanty washing or a face at a window: the dwellers are abroad, but they will return at night and stagger to their pallets.

IV

LEGENDS

THE character of a place is often most perfectly expressed in its associations. An event strikes root and grows into a legend, when it has happened amongst congenial surroundings. Ugly actions, above all in ugly places, have the true romantic quality, and become an undying property of their scene. To a man like Scott, the different appearances of nature seemed each to contain its own legend ready-made, which it was his to call forth; in such or such a place, only such or such events ought with propriety to happen; and in this spirit he made the *Lady of the Lake* for Ben Venue, the *Heart of Midlothian* for Edinburgh, and the *Pirate*, so indifferently written but so romantically conceived, for the desolate islands and roaring tideways of the North. The common run of mankind have, from generation to generation, an instinct almost as delicate as that of Scott; but where he created new things, they only forget what is unsuitable among the old; and by survival of the fittest, a body of tradition becomes a work of art. So, in the low dens and high-flying garrets of Edinburgh, people may go back upon dark passages in the town's adventures, and chill their marrow with winter's tales about the fire; tales that are singularly apposite and characteristic, not only of the old life, but of the very constitution of built nature in that part, and singularly well qualified to add horror to horror, when the wind pipes around the tall *lands*, and hoots adown arched passages, and the far-spread wilderness of city lamps keeps quavering and flaring in the gusts.

Here, it is the tale of Begbie the bank-porter, stricken to the heart at a blow and left in his blood within a step or two of the crowded High Street. There, people hush their voices over Burke and Hare; over drugs and violated graves, and the resurrection-men smothering their victims with their knees. Here, again, the fame of Deacon Brodie is kept piously fresh. A great man in his day was the Deacon; well seen in good society, crafty with his hands as a cabinetmaker, and one who could sing a song with taste. Many a citizen was proud to welcome the Deacon to supper, and dismissed him with regret at a timeous hour, who would have been vastly disconcerted had he known how soon, and in what guise, his visitor returned. Many stories are told of this redoubtable Edinburgh burglar, but the one I have in my mind most vividly gives the key of all the rest. A friend of Brodie's, nested some way towards heaven in one of these great *lands*, had told him of a projected visit to the country, and afterwards detained by some affairs, put it off and stayed the night in town. The good man had lain some time awake; it was far on in the small hours by the Tron bell; when suddenly there came a creak, a jar, a faint light. Softly he clambered out of bed and up to a false window which looked upon another room, and there, by the glimmer of a thieves' lantern, was his good friend the Deacon in a mask. It is characteristic of the town and the town's manners that this little episode should have been quietly tided over, and quite a good time elapsed before a great robbery, an escape, a Bow Street runner, a cock-fight, an apprehension in a cupboard in Amsterdam, and a last step into the air off his own greatly improved gallows drop, brought the career of Deacon William Brodie to an end. But still, by the mind's eye, he may be seen, a man harassed below a mountain of duplicity, slinking from a magistrate's supper-room to a thieves' ken, and pickeering among the closes by the flicker of a dark lamp.

Or where the Deacon is out of favour, perhaps some memory lingers of the great plagues, and of fatal houses still unsafe to enter within the memory of man. For in time of pestilence the discipline had been sharp and sudden, and what we now call "stamping out contagion" was carried on with deadly rigour. The officials, in their gowns of grey, with a white St. Andrew's cross on back and breast, and a white cloth carried before them on a staff, perambulated the city, adding the terror of man's justice to the fear of God's visitation. The dead they buried on the Borough Muir; the living who had concealed the sickness were drowned, if they were women, in the Quarry Holes, and if they were men, were hanged and gibbeted at their own doors; and wherever the evil had passed, furniture was destroyed and houses closed. And the most bogeyish part of the story is about such houses. Two generations back they still stood dark and empty; people avoided them as they passed by; the boldest schoolboy only shouted through the key-hole and made off; for within, it was supposed, the plague lay ambushed like a basilisk, ready to flow forth and spread blain and pustule through the city. What a terrible next-door neighbour for superstitious citizens! A rat scampering within would send a shudder through the stoutest heart. Here, if you like, was a sanitary parable, addressed by our uncleanly forefathers to their own neglect.

And then we have Major Weir; for although even his house is now demolished, old Edinburgh cannot clear herself of his unholy memory. He and his sister lived together in an odour of sour piety. She was a marvellous spinster; he had a rare gift of supplication, and was known among devout admirers by the name of Angelical Thomas. "He was a tall, black man, and ordinarily looked down to the ground; a grim countenance, and a big nose. His garb was still a cloak, and somewhat dark, and he never went without his staff." How it came about that Angelical Thomas was burned in company with his staff, and his sister in gentler manner hanged, and whether these two were simply religious maniacs of the more furious order, or had real as well as imaginary sins upon their old-world shoulders, are points happily beyond the reach of our intention. At least, it is suitable enough that out of this superstitious city some such example should have been put forth: the outcome and fine flower of dark and vehement religion. And at least the facts struck the public fancy and brought forth a remarkable family of myths. It would appear that the Major's staff went upon his errands, and even ran before him with a lantern on dark nights. Gigantic females, "stentoriously laughing and gaping with tehees of laughter" at unseasonable hours of night and morning, haunted the purlieus of his abode. His house fell under such a load of infamy that no one dared to sleep in it, until municipal improvement levelled the structure with the ground. And my father has often been told in the nursery how the devil's coach, drawn by six coal-black horses with fiery eyes, would drive at night into the West Bow, and belated people might see the dead Major through the glasses.

Another legend is that of the two maiden sisters. A legend I am afraid it may be, in the most discreditable meaning of the term; or perhaps something worse—a mere yesterday's fiction. But it is a story of some vitality, and is worthy of a place in the Edinburgh calendar. This pair inhabited a single room; from the facts, it must have been double-bedded; and it may have been of some dimensions: but when all is said, it was a single room. Here our two spinsters fell out—on some point of controversial divinity belike: but fell out so bitterly that there was never a word spoken between them, black or white, from that day forward. You would have thought they would separate: but no; whether from lack of means, or the Scottish fear of scandal, they continued to keep house together where they were. A chalk line drawn upon the floor separated their two domains; it bisected the doorway and the fireplace, so that each could go out and in, and do her cooking, without violating the territory of the other. So, for years, they coexisted in a hateful silence; their meals, their ablutions, their friendly visitors, exposed to an unfriendly scrutiny; and at night, in the dark watches, each could hear the breathing of her enemy. Never did four walls look down upon an uglier spectacle than these sisters rivalling in unsisterliness. Here is a canvas for

Hawthorne to have turned into a cabinet picture—he had a Puritanic vein, which would have fitted him to treat this Puritanic horror; he could have shown them to us in their sicknesses and at their hideous twin devotions, thumbing a pair of great Bibles, or praying aloud for each other's penitence with marrowy emphasis; now each, with kilted petticoat, at her own corner of the fire on some tempestuous evening; now sitting each at her window, looking out upon the summer landscape sloping far below them towards the firth, and the field-paths where they had wandered hand in hand; or, as age and infirmity grew upon them and prolonged their toilettes, and their hands began to tremble and their heads to nod involuntarily, growing only the more steeled in enmity with years; until one fine day, at a word, a look, a visit, or the approach of death, their hearts would melt and the chalk boundary be overstepped for ever.

Alas! to those who know the ecclesiastical history of the race—the most perverse and melancholy in man's annals—this will seem only a figure of much that is typical of Scotland and her high-seated capital above the Forth—a figure so grimly realistic that it may pass with strangers for a caricature. We are wonderful patient haters for conscience' sake up here in the North. I spoke, in the first of these papers, of the Parliament of the Established and Free Churches, and how they can hear each other singing psalms across the street. There is but a street between them in space, but a shadow between them in principle; and yet there they sit, enchanted, and in damnatory accents pray for each other's growth in grace. It would be well if there were no more than two; but the sects in Scotland form a large family of sisters, and the chalk lines are thickly drawn, and run through the midst of many private homes. Edinburgh is a city of churches, as though it were a place of pilgrimage. You will see four within a stone-cast at the head of the West Bow. Some are crowded to the doors; some are empty like monuments; and yet you will ever find new ones in the building. Hence that surprising clamour of church bells that suddenly breaks out upon the Sabbath morning, from Trinity and the sea-skirts to Morningside on the borders of the hills. I have heard the chimes of Oxford playing their symphony in a golden autumn morning, and beautiful it was to hear. But in Edinburgh all manner of loud bells join, or rather disjoin, in one swelling, brutal babblement of noise. Now one overtakes another, and now lags behind it; now five or six all strike on the pained tympanum at the same punctual instant of time, and make together a dismal chord of discord; and now for a second all seem to have conspired to hold their peace. Indeed, there are not many uproars in this world more dismal than that of the Sabbath bells in Edinburgh: a harsh ecclesiastical tocsin; the outcry of incongruous orthodoxies, calling on every separate conventicler to put up a protest, each in his own synagogue, against "right-hand extremes and left-hand defections." And surely there are few worse extremes than this extremity of zeal; and few more deplorable defections than this disloyalty to Christian love. Shakespeare wrote a comedy of "Much Ado about Nothing." The Scottish nation made a fantastic tragedy on the same subject. And it is for the success of this remarkable piece that these bells are sounded every Sabbath morning on the hills above the Forth. How many of them might rest silent in the steeple, how many of these ugly churches might be demolished and turned once more into useful building material, if people who think almost exactly the same thoughts about religion would condescend to worship God under the same roof! But there are the chalk lines. And which is to pocket pride, and speak the foremost word?

V

GREYFRIARS

IT was Queen Mary who threw open the gardens of the Grey Friars: a new and semi-rural cemetery in those days, although it has grown an antiquity in its turn and been superseded by half a dozen others. The Friars must have had a pleasant time on summer evenings; for their gardens were situated to a wish, with the tall castle and the tallest of the Castle Crags in front. Even now, it is one of our famous Edinburgh points of view; and strangers are led thither to see, by yet another instance, how strangely the city lies upon her hills. The enclosure is of an irregular shape; the double church of Old and New Greyfriars stands on the level at the top; a few thorns are dotted here and there, and the ground falls by terrace and steep slope towards the north. The open shows many slabs and table tombstones; and all round the margin, the place is girt by an array of aristocratic mausoleums appallingly adorned.

Setting aside the tombs of Roubilliac, which belong to the heroic order of graveyard art, we Scots stand, to my fancy, highest among nations in the matter of grimly illustrating death. We seem to love for their own sake the emblems of time and the great change; and even around country churches you will find a wonderful exhibition of skulls, and crossbones, and noseless angels, and trumpets pealing for the Judgment Day. Every mason was a pedestrian Holbein: he had a deep consciousness of death, and loved to put its terrors pithily before the churchyard loiterer; he was brimful of rough hints upon mortality, and any dead farmer was seized upon to be a text. The classical examples of this art are in Greyfriars. In their time, these were doubtless costly monuments, and reckoned of a very elegant proportion by contemporaries; and now, when the elegance is not so apparent, the significance remains. You may perhaps look with a smile on the profusion of Latin mottoes—some crawling endwise up the shaft of a pillar, some issuing on a scroll from angels' trumpets—on the emblematic horrors, the figures rising headless from the grave, and all the traditional ingenuities in which it pleased our fathers to set forth their sorrow for the dead and their sense of earthly mutability. But it is not a hearty sort of mirth. Each ornament may have been executed by the merriest apprentice, whistling as he plied the mallet; but the original meaning of each, and the combined effect of so many of them in this quiet enclosure, is serious to the point of melancholy.

Round a great part of the circuit, houses of a low class present their backs to the churchyard. Only a few inches separate the living from the dead. Here, a window is partly blocked up by the pediment of a tomb; there, where the street falls far below the level of the graves, a chimney has been trained up the back of a monument, and a red pot looks vulgarly over from behind. A damp smell of the graveyard finds its way into houses where workmen sit at meat. Domestic life on a small scale goes forward visibly at the windows. The very solitude and stillness of the enclosure, which lies apart from the town's traffic, serves to accentuate the contrast. As you walk upon the graves, you see children scattering crumbs to feed the sparrows; you hear people singing or washing dishes, or the sound of tears and castigation; the linen on a clothes-pole flaps against funereal sculpture; or perhaps the cat slips over the lintel and descends on a memorial urn. And as there is nothing else astir, these incongruous sights and noises take hold on the attention and exaggerate the sadness of the place.

Greyfriars is continually overrun by cats. I have seen one afternoon as many as thirteen of them seated on the grass beside old Milne, the Master Builder, all sleek and fat, and complacently blinking, as if they had fed upon strange meats. Old Milne was chanting with the saints, as we may hope, and cared little for the company about his grave; but I confess the spectacle had an ugly side for me; and I was glad to step forward and raise my eyes to where the castle and the roofs of the Old Town, and the spire of the Assembly Hall, stood deployed against the sky with the colourless precision of engraving. An open outlook is to be desired from a churchyard, and a sight of the sky and some of the world's beauty relieves a mind from morbid thoughts.

I shall never forget one visit. It was a grey, dropping day; the grass was strung with raindrops; and the people in the houses kept hanging out their shirts and petticoats and angrily taking them in again, as the weather turned from wet to fair and back again. A gravedigger and a friend of his, a gardener from the country, accompanied me into one after another of the cells and little courtyards in which it gratified the wealthy of old days to enclose their old bones from neighbourhood. In one, under a sort of shrine, we found a forlorn human effigy, very realistically executed down to the detail of his ribbed stockings, and holding in his hand a ticket with the date of his demise. He looked most pitiful and ridiculous, shut up by himself in his aristocratic precinct, like a bad old boy or an inferior forgotten deity under a new dispensation; the burdocks grew familiarly about his feet, the rain dripped all round him; and the world maintained the most entire indifference as to who he was or whither he had gone. In another, a vaulted tomb, handsome externally but horrible inside with damp and cobwebs, there were three mounds of black earth and an uncovered thigh bone. This was the place of interment, it appeared, of a family with whom the gardener had been long in service. He was among old acquaintances. "This'll be Miss Marg'et's," said he, giving the bone a friendly kick. "The auld——!" I have always an uncomfortable feeling in a graveyard, at sight of so many tombs to perpetuate memories best forgotten; but I never had the impression so strongly as that day. People had been at some expense in both these cases: to provoke a melancholy feeling of derision in the one, and an insulting epithet in the other. The proper inscription for the most part of mankind, I began to think, is the cynical jeer, *cras tibi*. That, if anything, will stop the mouth of a carper; since it both admits the worst and carries the war triumphantly into the enemy's camp.

Greyfriars is a place of many associations. There was one window in a house at the lower end, now demolished, which was pointed out to me by the gravedigger as a spot of legendary interest. Burke, the resurrection man, infamous for so many murders at five shillings a head, used to sit thereat, with pipe and nightcap, to watch burials going forward on the green. In a tomb higher up, which must then have been but newly finished, John Knox, according to the same informant, had taken refuge in a turmoil of the Reformation. Behind the church is the haunted mausoleum of Sir George Mackenzie: Bloody Mackenzie, Lord Advocate in the Covenanting troubles and author of some pleasing sentiments on toleration. Here, in the last century, an old Heriot's Hospital boy once harboured from the pursuit of the police. The Hospital is next door to Greyfriars—a courtly building among lawns, where, on Founder's Day, you may see a multitude of children playing Kiss-in-the-Ring and Round the Mulberry-bush. Thus, when the fugitive had managed to conceal himself in the tomb, his old schoolmates had a hundred opportunities to bring him food; and there he lay in safety till a ship was found to smuggle him abroad. But his must have been indeed a heart of brass, to lie all day and night alone with the dead persecutor; and other lads were far from emulating him in courage. When a man's soul is certainly in hell, his body will scarce lie quiet in a tomb however costly; some time or other the door must open, and the reprobate come forth in the abhorred garments of the grave. It was thought a high piece of prowess to knock at the Lord Advocate's mausoleum and challenge him to appear. "Bluidy Mackenzie, come oot if ye daur!" sang the foolhardy urchins. But Sir George had other affairs on hand; and the author of an essay on toleration continues to sleep peacefully among the many whom he so intolerantly helped to slay.

For this *infelix campus*, as it is dubbed in one of its own inscriptions—an inscription over which Dr. Johnson passed a critical eye—is in many ways sacred to the memory of the men whom Mackenzie persecuted. It was here, on the flat tombstones, that the Covenant was signed by an enthusiastic people. In the long arm of the churchyard that extends to Lauriston, the prisoners from Bothwell Bridge—fed on bread and water, and guarded, life for life, by vigilant marksmen—lay five months looking for the scaffold or the plantations. And while the good work was going forward in the Grassmarket, idlers in Greyfriars might have heard the throb of the military drums that drowned the voices of the martyrs. Nor is this all: for down in the corner farthest from Sir George, there stands a monument dedicated, in uncouth Covenanting verse, to all who lost their lives in that contention. There is no moorsman shot in a snow shower beside Irongray or Co'monell; there is not one of the two hundred who were drowned off the Orkneys; nor so much as a poor, over-driven, Covenanting slave in the American plantations; but can lay claim to a share in that memorial and, if such things interest just men among the shades, can boast he has a monument on earth as well as Julius Cæsar or the Pharaohs. Where they may all lie, I know not. Far-scattered bones, indeed! But if the reader cares to learn how some of them—or some part of some of them—found their way at length to such honourable sepulture, let him listen to the words of one who was their comrade in life and their apologist when they were dead. Some of the insane controversial matter I omit, as well as some digressions, but leave the rest in Patrick Walker's language and orthography:—

> "The never to be forgotten Mr. *James Renwick* told me, that he was Witness to their Public Murder at the *Gallowlee*, between *Leith* and *Edinburgh*, when he saw the Hangman hash and hagg off all their Five Heads, with *Patrick Foreman's* Right Hand: Their Bodies were all buried at the Gallows Foot; their Heads, with *Patrick's* Hand, were brought and put upon five Pikes on

the *Pleasaunce-Port*. . . . Mr. *Renwick* told me also that it was the first public Action that his Hand was at, to conveen Friends, and lift their murthered Bodies, and carried them to the West Churchyard of *Edinburgh*,"—not Greyfriars, this time,—" and buried them there. Then they came about the City . . . and took down these Five Heads and that Hand; and Day being come, they went quickly up the *Pleasaunce*; and when they came to *Lauristoun* Yards, upon the South-side of the City, they durst not venture, being so light, to go and bury their Heads with their Bodies, which they designed; it being present Death, if any of them had been found. *Alexander Tweedie*, a Friend, being with them, who at that Time was Gardner in these Yards, concluded to bury them in his Yard, being in a Box (wrapped in Linen), where they lay 45 Years except 3 Days, being executed upon the 10th of *October* 1681, and found the 7th Day of *October* 1726. That Piece of Ground lay for some Years unlaboured; and trenching it, the Gardner found them, which affrighted him; the Box was consumed. Mr. *Schaw*, the Owner of these Yards, caused lift them, and lay them upon a Table in his Summer-house: Mr. *Schaw's* mother was so kind, as to cut out a Linen-cloth, and cover them. They lay Twelve Days there, where all had Access to see them. *Alexander Tweedie*, the foresaid Gardner, said, when dying, There was a Treasure hid in his Yard, but neither Gold nor Silver. *Daniel Tweedie*, his Son, came along with me to that Yard, and told me that his Father planted a white Rose-bush above them, and farther down the Yard a red Rose-bush, which were more fruitful than any other Bush in the Yard . . . Many came"—to see the heads—" out of Curiosity; yet I rejoiced to see so many concerned grave Men and Women favouring the Dust of our Martyrs. There were Six of us concluded to bury them upon the Nineteenth Day of *October* 1726, and every One of us to acquaint Friends of the Day and Hour, being *Wednesday*, the Day of the Week on which most of them were executed, and at 4 of the Clock at Night, being the Hour that most of them went to their resting Graves. We caused make a compleat Coffin for them in Black, with four Yards of fine Linen, the way that our Martyrs Corps were managed. . . . Accordingly we kept the aforesaid Day and Hour, and doubled the Linen, and laid the Half of it below them, their nether Jaws being parted from their Heads; but being young Men, their Teeth remained. All were Witness to the Holes in each of their Heads, which the Hangman broke with his Hammer; and according to the Bigness of their Sculls, we laid the Jaws to them, and drew the other Half of the Linen above them, and stufft the Coffin with Shavings. Some prest hard to go thorow the chief Parts of the City as was done at the Revolution; but this we refused, considering that it looked airy and frothy, to make such Show of them, and inconsistent with the solid serious Observing of such an affecting, surprizing unheard-of Dispensation: But took the ordinary Way of other Burials from that

Place, to wit, we went east the Back of the Wall, and in at *Bristo-Port*, and down the Way to the Head of the *Cowgate*, and turned up to the Church-yard, where they were interred closs to the Martyrs Tomb, with the greatest Multitude of People Old and Young, Men and Women, Ministers and others, that ever I saw together."

And so there they were at last, in " their resting graves." So long as men do their duty, even if it be greatly in a misapprehension, they will be leading pattern lives ; and whether or not they come to lie beside a martyrs' monument we may be sure they will find a safe haven somewhere in the providence of God. It is not well to think of death, unless we temper the thought with that of heroes who despised it. Upon what ground, is of small account ; if it be only the bishop who was burned for his faith in the antipodes, his memory lightens the heart and makes us walk undisturbed among graves. And so the martyrs' monument is a wholesome heartsome spot in the field of the dead ; and as we look upon it, a brave influence comes to us from the land of those who have won their discharge and, in another phrase of Patrick Walker's, got " cleanly off the stage."

VI

NEW TOWN: TOWN AND COUNTRY

IT is as much a matter of course to decry the New Town as to exalt the Old; and the most celebrated authorities have picked out this quarter as the very emblem of what is condemnable in architecture. Much may be said, much indeed has been said, upon the text; but to the unsophisticated, who call anything pleasing if it only pleases them, the New Town of Edinburgh seems, in itself, not only gay and airy, but highly picturesque. An old skipper, invincibly ignorant of all theories of the sublime and beautiful, once propounded as his most radiant notion for Paradise: "The New Town of Edinburgh, with the wind the matter of a point free." He has now gone to that sphere where all good tars are promised pleasant weather in the song, and perhaps his thoughts fly somewhat higher. But there are bright and temperate days—with soft air coming from the inland hills, military music sounding bravely from the hollow of the gardens, the flags all waving on the palaces of Princes Street—when I have seen the town through a sort of glory, and shaken hands in sentiment with the old sailor. And indeed, for a man who has been much tumbled round Orcadian skerries, what scene could be more agreeable to witness? On such a day, the valley wears a surprising air of festival. It seems (I do not know how else to put my meaning) as if it were a trifle too good to be true. It is what Paris ought to be. It has the scenic quality that would best set off a life of unthinking, open-air diversion. It was meant by nature for the realisation of the society of comic operas. And you can imagine, if the climate were but towardly, how all the world and his wife would flock into these gardens in the cool of the evening, to hear cheerful music, to sip pleasant drinks, to see the moon rise from behind Arthur's Seat and shine upon the spires and monuments and the green tree-tops, in the valley. Alas! and the next morning the rain is splashing on the window, and the passengers flee along Princes Street before the galloping squalls.

It cannot be denied that the original design was faulty and short-sighted, and did not fully profit by the capabilities of the situation. The architect was essentially a town bird, and he laid out the modern city with a view to street scenery, and to street scenery alone. The country did not enter into his plan; he had never lifted his eyes to the hills. If he had so chosen, every street upon the northern slope might have been a noble terrace and commanded an extensive and beautiful view. But the space has been too closely built; many of the houses front the wrong way, intent, like the Man with the Muck-Rake, on what is not worth observation, and standing discourteously backforemost in the ranks; and in a word, it is too often only from attic windows, or here and there at a crossing, that you can get a look beyond the city upon its diversified surroundings. But perhaps it is all the more surprising, to come suddenly on a corner, and see a perspective of a mile or more of falling street, and beyond that woods and villas, and a blue arm of the sea, and the hills upon the farther side.

Fergusson, our Edinburgh poet, Burns's model, once saw a butterfly at the Town Cross; and the sight inspired him with a worthless little ode. This painted countryman, the dandy of the rose garden, looked far abroad in such a humming neighbourhood; and you can fancy what moral considerations a youthful poet would supply. But the incident, in a fanciful sort of way, is characteristic of the place. Into no other city does the sight of the country enter so far; if you do not meet a butterfly, you shall certainly catch a glimpse of far-away trees upon your walk; and the place is full of theatre tricks in the way of scenery. You peep under an arch, you descend stairs that look as if they would land you in a cellar, you turn to the back-window of a grimy tenement in a lane :—and behold ! you are face-to-face with distant and bright prospects. You turn a corner, and there is the sun going down into the Highland hills. You look down an alley, and see ships tacking for the Baltic.

For the country people to see Edinburgh on her hill-tops, is one thing ; it is another for the citizen, from the thick of his affairs, to overlook the country. It should be a genial and ameliorating influence in life ; it should prompt good thoughts and remind him of Nature's unconcern : that he can watch from day to day, as he trots officeward, how the Spring green brightens in the wood or the field grows black under a moving ploughshare. I have been tempted, in this connection, to deplore the slender faculties of the human race, with its penny-whistle of a voice, its dull ears, and its narrow range of sight. If you could see as people are to see in heaven, if you had eyes such as you can fancy for a superior race, if you could take clear note of the objects of vision, not only a few yards, but a few miles from where you stand :—think how agreeably your sight would be entertained, how pleasantly your thoughts would be diversified, as you walked the Edinburgh streets ! For you might pause, in some business perplexity, in the midst of the city traffic, and perhaps catch the eye of a shepherd as he sat down to breathe upon a heathery shoulder of the Pentlands ; or perhaps some urchin, clambering in a country elm, would put aside the leaves and show you his flushed and rustic visage ; or a fisher racing seawards, with the tiller under his elbow, and the sail sounding in the wind, would fling you a salutation from between Anst'er and the May.

To be old is not the same thing as to be picturesque ; nor because the Old Town bears a strange physiognomy, does it at all follow that the New Town shall look commonplace. Indeed, apart from antique houses, it is curious how much description would apply commonly to either. The same sudden accidents of ground, a similar dominating site above the plain, and the same superposition of one rank of society over another, are to be observed in both. Thus, the broad and comely approach to Princes Street from the east, lined with hotels and public offices, makes a leap over the gorge of the Low Calton ; if you cast a glance over the parapet, you look direct into that sunless and disreputable confluent of Leith Street ; and the same tall houses open upon both thoroughfares. This is only the New Town passing overhead above its own cellars ; walking, so to speak, over its own children, as is the way of cities and the human race, but at the Dean Bridge, you may behold a spectacle of a more novel order. The river runs at the bottom of a deep valley, among rocks and between gardens ; the crest of either bank is occupied by some of the most commodious streets and crescents in the modern city ; and a handsome bridge unites the two summits. Over this, every afternoon, private carriages go spinning by, and ladies with card-cases pass to and fro about the duties of society. And yet down below you may still see, with its mills and foaming weir, the little rural village of Dean. Modern improvement has gone overhead on its high level viaduct ; and the extended city has cleanly overleapt, and left unaltered, what was once the summer retreat of its comfortable citizens. Every town embraces hamlets in its growth ; Edinburgh herself has embraced a good few ; but it is strange to see one still surviving—and to see it some hundreds of feet below your path. Is it Torre del Greco that is built above buried Herculaneum ? Herculaneum was dead at least ; but the sun still shines upon the roofs of Dean ; the smoke still rises thriftily from its chimneys ; the dusty miller comes to his door, looks at the gurgling water, hearkens to the turning wheel and the birds about the shed, and perhaps whistles an air of his own to enrich the symphony—for all the world as if Edinburgh were still the old Edinburgh on the Castle Hill, and Dean were still the quietest of hamlets buried a mile or so in the green country.

It is not so long ago since magisterial David Hume lent the authority of his example to the exodus from the Old Town, and took up his new abode in a street which is still (so oddly may a jest become perpetuated) known as Saint David Street. Nor is the town so large but a holiday schoolboy may harry a bird's nest within half a mile of his own door. There are places that still smell of the plough in memory's nostrils. Here, one had heard a blackbird on a hawthorn; there, another was taken on summer evenings to eat strawberries and cream; and you have seen a waving wheatfield on the site of your present residence. The memories of an Edinburgh boy are but partly memories of the town. I look back with delight on many an escalade of garden walls; many a ramble among lilacs full of piping birds; many an exploration in obscure quarters that were neither town nor country; and I think that both for my companions and myself, there was a special interest, a point of romance, and a sentiment as of foreign travel, when we hit in our excursions on the butt-end of some former hamlet, and found a few rustic cottages imbedded among streets and squares. The tunnel to the Scotland Street Station, the sight of the trains shooting out of its dark maw with the two guards upon the brake, the thought of its length and the many ponderous edifices and open thoroughfares above, were certainly things of paramount impressiveness to a young mind. It was a subterranean passage, although of a larger bore than we were accustomed to in Ainsworth's novels; and these two words, "subterranean passage," were in themselves an irresistible attraction, and seemed to bring us nearer in spirit to the heroes we loved and the black rascals we secretly aspired to imitate. To scale the Castle Rock from West Princes Street Gardens, and lay a triumphal hand against the rampart itself, was to taste a high order of romantic pleasure. And there are other sights and exploits which crowd back upon my mind under a very strong illumination of remembered pleasure. But the effect of not one of them all will compare with the discoverer's joy, and the sense of old Time and his slow changes on the face of this earth, with which I explored such corners as Canonmills or Water Lane, or the nugget of cottages at Broughton Market. They were more rural than the open country, and gave a greater impression of antiquity than the oldest *land* upon the High Street. They too, like Fergusson's butterfly, had a quaint air of having wandered far from their own place; they looked abashed and homely, with their gables and their creeping plants, their outside stairs and running mill-streams; they were corners that smelt like the end of the country garden where I spent my Aprils; and the people stood to gossip at their doors, as they might have done in Colinton or Cramond.

In a great measure we may, and shall, eradicate this haunting flavour of the country. The last elm is dead in Elm Row; and the villas and the workmen's quarters spread apace on all the borders of the city. We can cut down the trees; we can bury the grass under dead paving-stones; we can drive brisk streets through all our sleepy quarters; and we may forget the stories and the play-grounds of our boyhood. But we have some possessions that not even the infuriate zeal of builders can utterly abolish and destroy. Nothing can abolish the hills, unless it be a cataclysm of nature which shall subvert Edinburgh Castle itself and lay all her florid structures in the dust. And as long as we have the hills and the Firth, we have a famous heritage to leave our children. Our windows, at no expense to us, are mostly artfully stained to represent a landscape. And when the Spring comes round, and the hawthorn begins to flower, and the meadows to smell of young grass, even in the thickest of our streets, the country hill-tops find out a young man's eyes, and set his heart beating for travel and pure air.

VII

THE VILLA QUARTERS

MR. RUSKIN'S denunciation of the New Town of Edinburgh includes, as I have heard it repeated, nearly all the stone and lime we have to show. Many, however, find a grand air and something settled and imposing in the better parts; and upon many, as I have said, the confusion of styles induces an agreeable stimulation of the mind. But upon the subject of our recent villa architecture, I am frankly ready to mingle my tears with Mr. Ruskin's, and it is a subject which makes one envious of his large declamatory and controversial eloquence.

Day by day, one new villa, one new object of offence, is added to another; all around Newington and Morningside, the dismallest structures keep springing up like mushrooms; the pleasant hills are loaded with them, each impudently squatted in its garden, each roofed and carrying chimneys like a house. And yet a glance of an eye discovers their true character. They are not houses; for they were not designed with a view to human habitation, and the internal arrangements are, as they tell me, fantastically unsuited to the needs of man. They are not buildings; for you can scarcely say a thing is built where every measurement is in clamant disproportion with its neighbour. They belong to no style of art, only to a form of business much to be regretted.

Why should it be cheaper to erect a structure where the size of the windows bears no rational relation to the size of the front? Is there any profit in a misplaced chimney-stalk? Does a hard-working, greedy builder gain more on a monstrosity than on a decent cottage of equal plainness? Frankly we should say, No. Bricks may be omitted, and green timber employed, in the construction of even a very elegant design; and there is no reason why a chimney should be made to vent, because it is so situated as to look comely from without. On the other hand, there is a noble way of being ugly: a high-aspiring fiasco like the fall of Lucifer. There are daring and gaudy buildings that manage to be offensive, without being contemptible; and we know that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." But to aim at making a commonplace villa, and to make it insufferably ugly in each particular; to attempt the homeliest achievement and to attain the bottom of derided failure; not to have any theory but profit and yet, at an equal expense, to outstrip all competitors in the art of conceiving and rendering permanent deformity; and to do all this in what is, by nature, one of the most agreeable neighbourhoods in Britain:—what are we to say, but that this also is a distinction, hard to earn, although not greatly worshipful?

Indifferent buildings give pain to the sensitive; but these things offend the plainest taste. It is a danger which threatens the amenity of the town; and as this eruption keeps spreading on our borders, we have ever the farther to walk among unpleasant sights, before we gain the country air. If the population of Edinburgh were a living, autonomous body, it would arise like one man and make night hideous with arson; the builders and their accomplices would be driven to work, like the Jews of yore, with the trowel in one hand and the defensive cutlass in the other; and as soon as one of these masonic wonders had been consummated, right-minded iconoclasts should fall thereon and make an end of it at once.

Possibly these words may meet the eye of a builder or two. It is no use asking them to employ an architect; for that would be to touch them in a delicate quarter, and its use would largely depend on what architect they were minded to call in. But let them get any architect in the world to point out any reasonably well-proportioned villa, not his own design; and let them reproduce that model to satiety.

VIII

THE CALTON HILL

THE east of new Edinburgh is guarded by a craggy hill, of no great elevation, which the town embraces. The old London Road runs on one side of it; while the New Approach, leaving it on the other hand, completes the circuit. You mount by stairs in a cutting of the rock to find yourself in a field of monuments. Dugald Stewart has the honours of situation and architecture; Burns is memorialised lower down upon a spur; Lord Nelson, as befits a sailor, gives his name to the topgallant of the Calton Hill. This latter erection has been differently and yet, in both cases, aptly compared to a telescope and a butter-churn; comparisons apart, it ranks among the vilest of men's handiworks. But the chief feature is an unfinished range of columns, "the Modern Ruin" as it has been called, an imposing object from far and near, and giving Edinburgh, even from the sea, that false air of a Modern Athens which has earned for her so many slighting speeches. It was meant to be a National Monument; and its present state is a very suitable monument to certain national characteristics. The old Observatory—a quaint brown building on the edge of the steep—and the new Observatory—a classical edifice with a dome—occupy the central portion of the summit. All these are scattered on a green turf, browsed over by some sheep.

The scene suggests reflections on fame and on man's injustice to the dead. You see Dugald Stewart rather more handsomely commemorated than Burns. Immediately below, in the Canongate Churchyard, lies Robert Fergusson, Burns's master in his art, who died insane while yet a stripling; and if Dugald Stewart has been somewhat too boisterously acclaimed, the Edinburgh poet, on the other hand, is most unrighteously forgotten. The votaries of Burns, a crew too common in all ranks in Scotland and more remarkable for number than discretion, eagerly suppress all mention of the lad who handed to him the poetic impulse and, up to the time when he grew famous, continued to influence him in his manner and the choice of subjects. Burns himself not only acknowledged his debt in a fragment of autobiography, but erected a tomb over the grave in Canongate Churchyard. This was worthy of an artist, but it was done in vain; and although I think I have read nearly all the biographies of Burns, I cannot remember one in which the modesty of nature was not violated, or where Fergusson was not sacrificed to the credit of his follower's originality. There is a kind of gaping admiration that would fain roll Shakespeare and Bacon into one, to have a bigger thing to gape at; and a class of men who cannot edit one author without disparaging all others. They are indeed mistaken if they think to please the great originals; and whoever puts Fergusson right with fame, cannot do better than dedicate his labours to the memory of Burns, who will be the best delighted of the dead.

Of all places for a view, this Calton Hill is perhaps the best; since you can see the Castle, which you lose from the Castle, and Arthur's Seat, which you cannot see from Arthur's Seat. It is the place to stroll on one of those days of sunshine and east wind which are so common in our more than temperate summer. The breeze comes off the sea, with a little of the freshness, and that touch of chill, peculiar to the quarter, which is delightful to certain very ruddy organisations and greatly the reverse to the majority of mankind. It brings with it a faint, floating haze, a cunning decolouriser, although not thick enough to obscure outlines near at hand. But the haze lies more thickly to windward at the far end of Musselburgh Bay; and over the Links of Aberlady and Berwick Law and the hump of the Bass Rock it assumes the aspect of a bank of thin sea fog.

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SRINAGAR

Immediately underneath upon the south, you command the yards of the High School, and the towers and courts of the new Jail—a large place, castellated to the extent of folly, standing by itself on the edge of a steep cliff, and often joyfully hailed by tourists as the Castle. In the one, you may perhaps see female prisoners taking exercise like a string of nuns ; in the other, schoolboys running at play and their shadows keeping step with them. From the bottom of the valley, a gigantic chimney rises almost to the level of the eye, a taller and a shapelier edifice than Nelson's Monument. Look a little farther, and there is Holyrood Palace, with its Gothic frontal and ruined abbey, and the red sentry pacing smartly to and fro before the door like a mechanical figure in a panorama. By way of an outpost, you can single out the little peak-roofed lodge, over which Rizzio's murderers made their escape and where Queen Mary herself, according to gossip, bathed in white wine to entertain her loveliness. Behind and overhead, lie the Queen's Park, from Muschat's Cairn to Dumbiedykes, St. Margaret's Loch, and the long wall of Salisbury Crags ; and thence, by knoll and rocky bulwark and precipitous slope, the eye rises to the top of Arthur's Seat, a hill for magnitude, a mountain in virtue of its bold design. This upon your left. Upon the right, the roofs and spires of the Old Town climb one above another to where the citadel prints its broad bulk and jagged crown of bastions on the western sky. Perhaps it is now one in the afternoon ; and at the same instant of time, a ball rises to the summit of Nelson's flagstaff close at hand, and, far away, a puff of smoke followed by a report bursts from the half-moon battery at the Castle. This is the time-gun by which people set their watches, as far as the sea coast or in hill farms upon the Pentlands. To complete the view, the eye enfilades Princes Street, black with traffic, and has a broad look over the valley between the Old Town and the New : here, full of railway trains and stepped over by the high North Bridge upon its many columns, and there, green with trees and gardens.

On the north, the Calton Hill is neither so abrupt in itself nor has it so exceptional an outlook ; and yet even here it commands a striking prospect. A gully separates it from the New Town. This is Greenside, where witches were burned and tournaments held in former days. Down that almost precipitous bank, Bothwell launched his horse, and so first, as they say, attracted the bright eyes of Mary. It is now tessellated with sheets and blankets out to dry, and the sound of people beating carpets is rarely absent. Beyond all this, the suburbs run out to Leith ; Leith camps on the seaside with her forest of masts ; Leith roads are full of ships at anchor ; the sun picks out the white pharos upon Inchkeith Island ; the Firth extends on either hand from the Ferry to the May ; the towns of Fifeshire sit, each in its bank of blowing smoke, along the opposite coast ; and the hills inclose the view, except to the farthest east, where the haze of the horizon rests upon the open sea. There lies the road to Norway : a dear road for Sir Patrick Spens and his Scots Lords ; and yonder smoke on the hither side of Largo Law is Aberdour, from whence they sailed to seek a queen for Scotland.

"O lang, lang, may the ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hands,
Or ere they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the land !"

The sight of the sea, even from a city, will bring thoughts of storm and sea disaster. The sailors' wives of Leith and the fisherwomen of Cockenzie, not sitting languorously with fans but crowding to the tail of the harbour with a shawl about their ears, may still look vainly for brave Scotsmen who will return no more, or boats that have gone on their last fishing. Since Sir Patrick sailed from Aberdour, what a multitude have gone down in the North Sea ! Yonder is Auldhame, where the London smack went ashore and wreckers cut the rings from ladies' fingers ; and a few miles round Fife Ness is the fatal Inchcape, now a star of guidance ; and the lee shore to the east of the Inchcape, is that Forfarshire coast where Mucklebackit sorrowed for his son.

These are the main features of the scene roughly sketched. How they are all tilted by the inclination of the ground, how each stands out in delicate relief against the rest, what manifold detail, and play of sun and shadow, animate and accentuate the picture, is a matter for a person on the spot, and turning swiftly on his heels, to grasp and bind together in one comprehensive look. It is the character of such a prospect, to be full of change and of things moving. The multiplicity embarrasses the eye; and the mind, among so much, suffers itself to grow absorbed with single points. You remark a tree in a hedgerow, or follow a cart along a country road. You turn to the city, and see children, dwarfed by distance into pigmies, at play about suburban doorsteps; you have a glimpse upon a thoroughfare where people are densely moving; you note ridge after ridge of chimney-stacks running downhill one behind another, and church spires rising bravely from the sea of roofs. At one of the innumerable windows, you watch a figure moving; on one of the multitude of roofs, you watch clambering chimney-sweeps. The wind takes a run and scatters the smoke; bells are heard, far and near, faint and loud, to tell the hour; or perhaps a bird goes dipping evenly over the housetops, like a gull across the waves. And here you are in the meantime, on this pastoral hillside, among nibbling sheep and looked upon by monumental buildings.

Return thither on some clear, dark, moonless night, with a ring of frost in the air, and only a star or two set sparsely in the vault of heaven; and you will find a sight as stimulating as the hoariest summit of the Alps. The solitude seems perfect; the patient astronomer, flat on his back under the Observatory dome and spying heaven's secrets, is your only neighbour; and yet from all round you there come up the dull hum of the city, the tramp of countless people marching out of time, the rattle of carriages and the continuous keen jingle of the tramway bells. An hour or so before, the gas was turned on; lamplighters scoured the city; in every house, from kitchen to attic, the windows kindled and gleamed forth into the dusk. And so now, although the town lies blue and darkling on her hills, innumerable spots of the bright element shine far and near along the pavements and upon the high façades. Moving lights of the railway pass and repass below the stationary lights upon the bridge. Lights burn in the Jail. Lights burn high up in the tall *lands* and on the Castle turrets, they burn low down in Greenside or along the Park. They run out one beyond the other into the dark country. They walk in a procession down to Leith, and shine singly far along Leith Pier. Thus, the plan of the city and her suburbs is mapped out upon the ground of blackness, as when a child pricks a drawing full of pinholes and exposes it before a candle ; not the darkest night of winter can conceal her high station and fanciful design ; every evening in the year she proceeds to illuminate herself in honour of her own beauty ; and as if to complete the scheme—or rather as if some prodigal Pharaoh were beginning to extend to the adjacent sea and country—half-way over to Fife, there is an outpost of light upon Inchkeith, and far to seaward, yet another on the May.

And while you are looking, across upon the Castle Hill, the drums and bugles begin to recall the scattered garrison ; the air thrills with the sound ; the bugles sing aloud ; and the last rising flourish mounts and melts into the darkness like a star : a martial swan-song, fitly rounding in the labours of the day.

IX

WINTER AND NEW YEAR

THE Scots dialect is singularly rich in terms of reproach against the winter wind. *Snell*, *blae*, *nirly*, and *scowthering*, are four of these significant vocables; they are all words that carry a shiver with them, and for my part as I see them aligned before me on the page, I am persuaded that a big wind comes tearing over the Firth from Burntisland and the northern hills; I think I can hear it howl in the chimney, and as I set my face northwards, feel its smarting kisses on my cheek. Even in the names of places there is often a desolate, inhospitable sound; and I remember two from the near neighbourhood of Edinburgh, Cauldhame and Blawweary, that would promise but starving comfort to their inhabitants. The inclemency of heaven, which has thus endowed the language of Scotland with words, has also largely modified the spirit of its poetry. Both poverty and a northern climate teach men the love of the hearth and the sentiment of the family; and the latter, in its own right, inclines a poet to the praise of strong waters. In Scotland, all our singers have a stave or two for blazing fires and stout potations:—to get indoors out of the wind and to swallow something hot to the stomach, are benefits so easily appreciated where they dwelt!

And this is not only so in country districts where the shepherd must wade in the snow all day after his flock, but in Edinburgh itself, and nowhere more apparently stated than in the works of our Edinburgh poet, Fergusson. He was a delicate youth, I take it, and willingly slunk from the robustious winter to an inn fireside. Love was absent from his life, or only present, if you prefer, in such a form that even the least serious of Burns's amourettes was ennobling by comparison ; and so there is nothing to temper the sentiment of indoor revelry which pervades the poor boy's verses. Although it is characteristic of his native town, and the manners of its youth to the present day, this spirit has perhaps done something to restrict his popularity. He recalls a supper-party pleasantry with something akin to tenderness ; and sounds the praises of the act of drinking as if it were virtuous, or at least witty, in itself. The kindly jar, the warm atmosphere of tavern parlours, and the revelry of lawyers' clerks, do not offer by themselves the materials of a rich existence. It was not choice, so much as an external fate, that kept Fergusson in this round of sordid pleasures. A Scot of poetic temperament, and without religious exaltation, drops as if by nature into the public-house. The picture may not be pleasing ; but what else is a man to do in this dog's weather ?

To none but those who have themselves suffered the thing in the body, can the gloom and depression of our Edinburgh winter be brought home. For some constitutions there is something almost physically disgusting in the bleak ugliness of easterly weather ; the wind wearies, the sickly sky depresses them ; and they turn back from their walk to avoid the aspect of the unrefulgent sun going down among perturbed and pallid mists. The days are so short that a man does much of his business, and certainly all his pleasure, by the haggard glare of gas lamps. The roads are as heavy as a fallow. People go by, so drenched and draggle-tailed that I have often wondered how they found the heart to undress. And meantime the wind whistles through the town as if it were an open meadow ; and if you lie awake all night, you hear it shrieking and raving overhead with a noise of shipwrecks and of falling houses. In a word, life is so unsightly that there are times when the heart turns sick in a man's inside ; and the look of a tavern, or the thought of the warm, fire-lit study, is like the touch of land to one who has been long struggling with the seas.

As the weather hardens towards frost, the world begins to improve for Edinburgh people. We enjoy superb, sub-arctic sunsets, with the profile of the city stamped in indigo upon a sky of luminous green. The wind may still be cold, but there is a briskness in the air that stirs good blood. People do not all look equally sour and downcast. They fall into two divisions: one, the knight of the blue face and hollow paunch, whom Winter has gotten by the vitals; the other well lined with New Year's fare, conscious of the touch of cold on his periphery, but stepping through it by the glow of his internal fires. Such an one I remember, triply cased in grease, whom no extremity of temperature could vanquish. "Well," would be his jovial salutation, "here's a sneezer!" And the look of these warm fellows is tonic, and upholds their drooping fellow-townsmen. There is yet another class who do not depend on corporal advantages, but support the winter in virtue of a brave and merry heart. One shivering evening, cold enough for frost but with too high a wind, and a little past sundown, when the lamps were beginning to enlarge their circles in the growing dusk, a brace of barefoot lassies were seen coming eastward in the teeth of the wind. If the one was as much as nine, the other was certainly not more than seven. They were miserably clad; and the pavement was so cold, you would have thought no one could lay a naked foot on it unflinching. Yet they came along waltzing, if you please, while the elder sang a tune to give them music. The person who saw this, and whose heart was full of bitterness at the moment, pocketed a reproof which has been of use to him ever since, and which he now hands on with his good wishes, to the reader.

At length, Edinburgh, with her satellite hills and all the sloping country, is sheeted up in white. If it has happened in the dark hours, nurses pluck their children out of bed and run with them to some commanding window, whence they may see the change that has been worked upon earth's face. "A' the hills are covered wi' snaw!" they sing, "and Winter's noo come fairly!" And the children, marvelling at the silence and the white landscape, find a spell appropriate to the season in the words. The reverberation of the snow increases the pale daylight, and brings all objects nearer the eye. The Pentlands are smooth and glittering, with here and there the black ribbon of a dry-stone dyke, and here and there, if there be wind, a cloud of blowing snow upon a shoulder. The Firth seems a leaden creek, that a man might almost jump across, between well-powdered Lothian and well-powdered Fife. And the effect is not, as in other cities, a thing of half a day; the streets are soon trodden black, but the country keeps its virgin white; and you have only to lift your eyes and look over miles of country snow. An indescribable cheerfulness breathes about the city; and the well-fed heart sits lightly and beats gaily in the bosom. It is New Year's weather.

New Year's Day, the great national festival, is a time of family expansions and of deep carousal. Sometimes, by a sore stroke of fate for this Calvinistic people, the year's anniversary falls upon a Sunday, when the public-houses are inexorably closed, when singing and even whistling is banished from our homes and highways, and the oldest toper feels called upon to go to church. Thus pulled about, as if between two loyalties, the Scots have to decide many nice cases of conscience, and ride the marches narrowly between the weekly and the annual observance. A party of convivial musicians, next door to a friend of mine, hung suspended in this manner on the brink of their diversions. From ten o'clock on Sunday night, my friend heard them tuning their instruments; and as the hour of liberty drew near, each must have had his music open, his bow in readiness across the fiddle, his foot already raised to mark the time, and his nerves braced for execution; for hardly had the twelfth stroke sounded from the earliest steeple, before they had launched forth into a secular bravura.

Currant-loaf is now popular eating in all households. For weeks before the great morning, confectioners display stacks of Scots bun—a dense, black substance, inimical to life—and full moons of shortbread adorned with mottoes of peel or sugar-plum, in honour of the season and the family affections. "Frae Auld Reekie," "A guid New Year to ye a'," "For the Auld Folk at Hame," are among the most favoured of these devices. Can you not see the carrier, after half a day's journey on pinching hill-roads, draw up before a cottage in Teviotdale, or perhaps in Manor Glen among the rowans, and the old people receiving the parcel with moist eyes and a prayer for Jock or Jean in the city? For at this season, on the threshold of another year of calamity and stubborn conflict, men feel a need to draw closer the links that unite them; they reckon the number of their friends, like allies before a war; and the prayers grow longer in the morning as the absent are recommended by name into God's keeping.

On the day itself, the shops are all shut as on a Sunday; only taverns, toyshops, and other holiday magazines, keep open doors. Every one looks for his handsel. The postmen and the lamplighters have left, at every house in their districts, a copy of vernacular verses, asking and thanking in a breath; and it is characteristic of Scotland that these verses may have sometimes a touch of reality in detail or sentiment and a measure of strength in the handling. All over the town, you may see comforter'd schoolboys hasting to squander their half-crowns. There are an infinity of visits to be paid; all the world is in the street, except the daintier classes; the sacramental greeting is heard upon all sides; Auld Lang Syne is much in people's mouths; and whisky and shortbread are staple articles of consumption. From an early hour a stranger will be impressed by the number of drunken men; and by afternoon drunkenness has spread to the women. With some classes of society, it is as much a matter of duty to drink hard on New Year's Day as to go to church on Sunday. Some have been saving their wages for perhaps a month to do the season honour. Many carry a whisky-bottle in their pocket, which they will press with embarrassing effusion on a perfect stranger. It is not expedient to risk one's body in a cab, or not, at least, until after a prolonged study of the driver. The streets, which are thronged from end to end, become a place for delicate pilotage. Singly or arm-in-arm, some speechless, others noisy and quarrelsome, the votaries of the New Year go meandering in and out and cannoning one against another; and now and again, one falls and lies as he has fallen. Before night, so many have gone to bed or the police office, that the streets seem almost clearer. And as *guisards* and *first-footers* are now not much seen except in country places, when once the New Year has been rung in and proclaimed at the Tron railings, the festivities begin to find their way indoors and something like quiet returns upon the town. But think, in these piled *lands*, of all the senseless snorers, all the broken heads and empty pockets!

Of old, Edinburgh University was the scene of heroic snowballing; and one riot obtained the epic honours of military intervention. But the great generation, I am afraid, is at an end; and even during my own college days, the spirit appreciably declined. Skating and sliding, on the other hand, are honoured more and more; and curling, being a creature of the national genius, is little likely to be disregarded. The patriotism that leads a man to eat Scots bun will scarce desert him at the curling-pond. Edinburgh, with its long, steep pavements, is the proper home of sliders; many a happy urchin can slide the whole way to school; and the profession of errand-boy is transformed into a holiday amusement. As for skating, there is scarce any city so handsomely provided. Duddingston Loch lies under the abrupt southern side of Arthur's Seat; in summer, a shield of blue, with swans sailing from the reeds; in winter, a field of ringing ice. The village church sits above it on a green promontory; and the village smoke rises from among goodly trees. At the church gates, is the historical *jougs*, a place of penance for the neck of detected sinners, and the historical *louping-on stane*, from which Dutch-built lairds and farmers climbed into the saddle. Here Prince Charlie slept before the battle of Prestonpans; and here Deacon Brodie, or one of his gang, stole a plough coulter before the burglary in Chessel's Court. On the opposite side of the loch, the ground rises to Craigmillar Castle, a place friendly to Stuart Mariolaters, It is worth a climb, even in summer, to look down upon the loch from Arthur's Seat ; but it is tenfold more so on a day of skating. The surface is thick with people moving easily and swiftly and leaning over at a thousand graceful inclinations ; the crowd opens and closes, and keeps moving through itself like water ; and the ice rings to half a mile away, with the flying steel. As night draws on, the single figures melt into the dusk, until only an obscure stir and coming and going of black clusters, is visible upon the loch. A little longer, and the first torch is kindled and begins to flit rapidly across the ice in a ring of yellow reflection, and this is followed by another and another, until the whole field is full of skimming lights.

X

TO THE PENTLAND HILLS

ON three sides of Edinburgh, the country slopes downward from the city, here to the sea, there to the fat farms of Haddington, there to the mineral fields of Linlithgow. On the south alone, it keeps rising until it not only out-tops the Castle but looks down on Arthur's Seat. The character of the neighbourhood is pretty strongly marked by a scarcity of hedges; by many stone walls of varying height; by a fair amount of timber, some of it well grown, but apt to be of a bushy, northern profile and poor in foliage; by here and there a little river, Esk or Leith or Almond, busily journeying in the bottom of its glen; and from almost every point, by a peep of the sea or the hills. There is no lack of variety, and yet most of the elements are common to all parts; and the southern district is alone distinguished by considerable summits and a wide view.

From Boroughmuirhead, where the Scottish army encamped before Flodden, the road descends a long hill, at the bottom of which and just as it is preparing to mount upon the other side, it passes a toll-bar and issues at once into the open country. Even as I write these words, they are being antiquated in the progress of events, and the chisels are tinkling on a new row of houses. The builders have at length adventured beyond the toll which held them in respect so long, and proceed to career in these fresh pastures like a herd of colts turned loose. As Lord Beaconsfield proposed to hang an architect by way of stimulation, a man, looking on these doomed meads, imagines a similar example to deter the builders; for it seems as if it must come to an open fight at last to preserve a corner of green country unbedevilled. And here, appropriately enough, there stood in old days a crow-haunted gibbet, with two bodies hanged in chains. I used to be shown, when a child, a flat stone in the roadway to which the gibbet had been fixed. People of a willing fancy were persuaded, and sought to persuade others, that this stone was never dry. And no wonder, they would add, for the two men had only stolen fourpence between them.

For about two miles the road climbs upwards, a long hot walk in summer time. You reach the summit at a place where four ways meet, beside the toll of Fairmilehead. The spot is breezy and agreeable both in name and aspect. The hills are close by across a valley: Kirk Yetton, with its long, upright scars visible as far as Fife, and Allermuir the tallest on this side: with wood and tilled field running high upon their borders, and haunches all moulded into innumerable glens and shelvings and variegated with heather and fern. The air comes briskly and sweetly off the hills, pure from the elevation and rustically scented by the upland plants; and even at the toll, you may hear the curlew calling on its mate. At certain seasons, when the gulls desert their surfy forelands, the birds of sea and mountain hunt and scream together in the same field at Fairmilehead. The winged, wild things intermix their wheelings, the sea-birds skim the tree-tops and fish among the furrows of the plough. These little craft of air are at home in all the world, so long as they cruise in their own element; and like sailors, ask but food and water from the shores they coast.

Below, over a stream, the road passes Bow Bridge, now a dairy-farm, but once a distillery of whisky. It chanced, some time in the past century, that the distiller was on terms of good fellowship with the visiting officer of excise. The latter was of an easy, friendly disposition and a master of convivial arts. Now and again, he had to walk out of Edinburgh to measure the distiller's stock; and although it was agreeable to find his business lead him in a friend's direction, it was unfortunate that the friend should be a loser by his visits. Accordingly, when he got about the level of Fairmilehead, the gauger would take his flute, without which he never travelled, from his pocket, fit it together, and set manfully to playing, as if for his own delectation and inspired by the beauty of the scene. His favourite air, it seems, was "Over the hills and far away." At the first note, the distiller pricked his ears. A flute at Fairmilehead? and playing "Over the hills and far away"? This must be his friendly enemy, the gauger. Instantly, horses were harnessed, and sundry barrels of whisky were got upon a cart, driven at a gallop round Hillend, and buried in the mossy glen behind Kirk Yetton. In the same breath, you may be sure, a fat fowl was put to the fire, and the whitest napery prepared for the back parlour. A little after, the gauger, having had his fill of music for the moment, came strolling down with the most innocent air imaginable, and found the good people at Bow Bridge taken entirely unawares by his arrival, but none the less glad to see him. The distiller's liquor and the gauger's flute would combine to speed the moments of digestion; and when both were somewhat mellow, they would wind up the evening with "Over the hills and far away" to an accompaniment of knowing glances. And at least, there is a smuggling story, with original and half-idyllic features.

A little farther, the road to the right passes an upright stone in a field. The country people call it General Kay's monument. According to them, an officer of that name had perished there in battle at some indistinct period before the beginning of history. The date is reassuring; for I think cautious writers are silent on the General's exploits. But the stone is connected with one of those remarkable tenures of land which linger on into the modern world from Feudalism. Whenever the reigning sovereign passes by, a certain landed proprietor is held bound to climb on to the top, trumpet in hand, and sound a flourish according to the measure of his knowledge in that art. Happily for a respectable family, crowned heads have no great business in the Pentland Hills. But the story lends a character of comicality to the stone; and the passer-by will sometimes chuckle to himself.

The district is dear to the superstitious. Hard by, at the back-gate of Comiston, a belated carter beheld a lady in white, " with the most beautiful, clear shoes upon her feet," who looked upon him in a very ghastly manner and then vanished; and just in front is the Hunters' Tryst, once a roadside inn, and not so long ago haunted by the devil in person. Satan led the inhabitants a pitiful existence. He shook the four corners of the building with lamentable outcries, beat at the doors and windows, overthrew crockery in the dead hours of the morning, and danced unholy dances on the roof. Every kind of spiritual disinfectant was put in requisition; chosen ministers were summoned out of Edinburgh and prayed by the hour; pious neighbours sat up all night making a noise of psalmody; but Satan minded them no more than the wind about the hill-tops; and it was only after years of persecution, that he left the Hunters' Tryst in peace to occupy himself with the remainder of mankind. What with General Kay, and the white lady, and this singular visitation, the neighbourhood offers great facilities to the makers of sun-myths; and without exactly casting in one's lot with that disenchanting school of writers, one cannot help hearing a good deal of the winter wind in the last story. " That nicht," says Burns, in one of his happiest moments,—

> " That nicht a child might understand
> The deil had business on his hand."

And if people sit up all night in lone places on the hills, with Bibles and tremulous psalms, they will be apt to hear some of the most fiendish noises in the world: the wind will beat on doors and dance upon roofs for them, and make the hills howl around their cottage with a clamour like the Judgment Day.

The road goes down through another valley, and then finally begins to scale the main slope of the Pentlands

A bouquet of old trees stands round a white farmhouse; and from a neighbouring dell, you can see smoke rising and leaves ruffling in the breeze. Straight above, the hills climb a thousand feet into the air. The neighbourhood, about the time of lambs, is clamorous with the bleating of flocks; and you will be awakened, in the grey of early summer mornings, by the barking of a dog or the voice of a shepherd shouting to the echoes. This, with the hamlet lying behind unseen, is Swanston.

The place in the dell is immediately connected with the city. Long ago, this sheltered field was purchased by the Edinburgh magistrates for the sake of the springs that rise or gather there. After they had built their water-house and laid their pipes, it occurred to them that the place was suitable for junketing. Once entertained, with jovial magistrates and public funds, the idea led speedily to accomplishment; and Edinburgh could soon boast of a municipal Pleasure House. The dell was turned into a garden; and on the knoll that shelters it from the plain and the sea winds, they built a cottage looking to the hills. They brought crockets and gargoyles from old St. Giles's which they were then restoring, and disposed them on the gables and over the door and about the garden; and the quarry which had supplied them with building material, they draped with clematis and carpeted with beds of roses. So much for the pleasure of the eye; for creature comfort, they made a capacious cellar in the hillside and fitted it with bins of the hewn stone. In process of time, the trees grew higher and gave shade to the cottage, and the evergreens sprang up and turned the dell into a thicket. There, purple magistrates relaxed themselves from the pursuit of municipal ambition; cocked hats paraded soberly about the garden and in and out among the hollies; authoritative canes drew ciphering upon the path; and at night, from high upon the hills, a shepherd saw lighted windows through the foliage and heard the voice of city dignitaries raised in song.

The farm is older. It was first a grange of Whitekirk Abbey, tilled and inhabited by rosy friars. Thence, after the Reformation, it passed into the hands of a true-blue Protestant family. During the Covenanting troubles, when a night conventicle was held upon the Pentlands, the farm doors stood hospitably open till the morning; the dresser was laden with cheese and bannocks, milk and brandy; and the worshippers kept slipping down from the hill between two exercises, as couples visit the supper-room between two dances of a modern ball. In the Forty-five, some foraging Highlanders from Prince Charlie's army fell upon Swanston in the dawn. The great-grandfather of the late farmer was then a little child; him they awakened by plucking the blankets from his bed, and he remembered, when he was an old man, their truculent looks and uncouth speech. The churn stood full of cream in the dairy, and with this they made their brose in high delight. "It was braw brose," said one of them. At last, they made off, laden like camels with their booty; and Swanston Farm has lain out of the way of history from that time forward. I do not know what may be yet in store for it. On dark days, when the mist runs low upon the hill, the house has a gloomy air as if suitable for private tragedy. But in hot July, you can fancy nothing more perfect than the garden, laid out in alleys and arbours and bright, old-fashioned flower-plots, and ending in a miniature ravine, all trellis-work and moss and tinkling waterfall, and housed from the sun under fathoms of broad foliage.

The hamlet behind is one of the least considerable of hamlets, and consists of a few cottages on a green beside a burn. Some of them (a strange thing in Scotland) are models of internal neatness; the beds adorned with patchwork, the shelves arrayed with willow-pattern plates, the floors and tables bright with scrubbing or pipeclay, and the very kettle polished like silver. It is the sign of a contented old age in country places, where there is little matter for gossip and no street sights. Housework becomes an art; and at evening, when the cottage interior shines and twinkles in the glow of the fire, the housewife folds her hands and contemplates her finished picture; the snow and the wind may do their worst, she has made herself a pleasant corner in the world. The city might be a thousand miles away: and yet it was from close by that Mr. Bough painted the distant view of Edinburgh which has been engraved for this collection*: and you have only to look at the cut, to see how near it is at hand. But hills and hill people are not easily sophisticated; and if you walk out here on a summer Sunday, it is as like as not the shepherd may set his dogs upon you. But keep an unmoved countenance; they look formidable at the charge, but their hearts are in the right place; and they will only bark and sprawl about you on the grass, unmindful of their master's excitations.

Kirk Yetton forms the north-eastern angle of the range; thence, the Pentlands trend off to south and west. From the summit you look over a great expanse of champaign sloping to the sea and behold a large variety of distant hills. There are the hills of Fife, the hills of Peebles, the Lammermoors and the Ochils, more or less mountainous in outline, more or less blue with distance. Of the Pentlands themselves, you see a field of wild heathery peaks with a pond gleaming in the midst; and to that side the view is as desolate as if you were looking into Galloway or Applecross. To turn to the other, is like a piece of travel. Far out in the lowlands Edinburgh shows herself, making a great smoke on clear days and spreading her suburbs about her for miles; the Castle rises darkly in the midst; and close by, Arthur's Seat makes a bold figure in the landscape. All around, cultivated fields, and woods, and smoking villages, and white country roads, diversify the uneven surface of the land. Trains crawl slowly abroad upon the railway lines; little ships are tacking in the Firth; the shadow of a mountainous cloud, as large as a parish, travels before the wind; the wind itself ruffles the wood and standing corn, and sends pulses of varying colour across the landscape. So you sit, like Jupiter upon Olympus, and look down from afar upon men's life. The city is as silent as a city of the dead: from all its humming thoroughfares, not a voice, not a footfall, reaches you upon the hill.

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* Reference to an etching in original edition.

The sea surf, the cries of ploughmen, the streams and the mill-wheels, the birds and the wind, keep up an animated concert through the plain; from farm to farm, dogs and crowing cocks contend together in defiance; and yet from this Olympian station, except for the whispering rumour of a train, the world has fallen into a dead silence and the business of town and country grown voiceless in your ears. A crying hill-bird, the bleat of a sheep, a wind singing in the dry grass, seem not so much to interrupt, as to accompany, the stillness; but to the spiritual ear, the whole scene makes a music at once human and rural, and discourses pleasant reflections on the destiny of man. The spiry, habitable city, ships, the divided fields, and browsing herds, and the straight highways, tell visibly of man's active and comfortable ways; and you may be never so laggard and never so unimpressionable, but there is something in the view that spirits up your blood and puts you in the vein for cheerful labour.

Immediately below is Fairmilehead, a spot of roof and a smoking chimney, where two roads, no thicker than packthread, intersect beside a hanging wood. If you are fanciful, you will be reminded of the gauger in the story. And the thought of this old exciseman, who once lipped and fingered on his pipe and uttered clear notes from it in the mountain air, and the words of the song he affected, carry your mind "Over the hills and far away" to distant countries; and you have a vision of Edinburgh not, as you see her, in the midst of a little neighbourhood, but as a boss upon the round world with all Europe and the deep sea for her surroundings. For every place is a centre to the earth, whence highways radiate or ships set sail for foreign ports; the limit of a parish is not more imaginary than the frontier of an empire; and as a man sitting at home in his cabinet and swiftly writing books, so a city sends abroad an influence and a portrait of herself. There is no Edinburgh emigrant, far or near, from China to Peru, but he or she carries some lively pictures of the mind, some sunset behind the Castle cliffs, some snow scene, some maze of city lamps, indelible in the memory and delightful to study in the intervals of toil. For any such, if this book fall in their way, here are a few more home pictures. It would be pleasant, if they should recognise a house where they had dwelt, or a walk that they had taken.

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